

Shaam-e Ghazal Sur, Saaz, Sangeet



February 28, 2015

Orlando, FL

Oh what a lovely night! Shaam-e Ghazal, Sur, Saaz, Sangeet program was a super hit event on Saturday night. The audience was very excited and thrilled with the artists' performances and the program. Despite the rain and the cricket match, they showed up in droves to attend this event. Although the program started with a slight delay, we were able to accommodate all the singers in the three hour time slot. Everyone loved the dinner, the ambiance, and the show and they all left fully satisfied with big smiles on their faces because they got more than their money's worth as the program exceeded their expectations. This program was priceless.



Ahmed Khan did a great job setting up the stage and the banquet hall, and the menu and dishes were well-prepared and just right to satisfy the cravings of the hungry crowd. The chefs did an excellent job and the guests enjoyed the dinner by **BBQ Tonight** and the sweet treats

provided by Mr. and Mrs. Sheikh Ijaz; a production of **Cruncheez Frozen Desserts**. Let's give a big round of applause to Ahmed and his team and Mr. and Mrs. Ijaz Ahmad for doing such a wonderful job.

Just to let you know that I did not order the rain, but we had to deal with it. The rain kept some of our members away from this function, but it did not dampen our spirits and the guests who came did not regret being there either. And those who did not come, well, what can I say; they missed one of a kind show which was the first for us as well as we had never organized a musical medley of this type in the past. It will always be one of the most memorable events hosted by *Awan-e Urdu*.

We started the program with one and only Sarfraz Habibi who claims not to be a singer, but does a very good job of singing songs in different raags. If he does not want to disclose his

connections with **Tansen**, that's okay. He was followed by Latif Kasu, another fine artist and master of melody. They kept the audience spellbound with their songs and ghazals. Our guest, Saleem Afridi from Daytona Beach was reluctant to sing, but his stage fright was over in a very short time. Although, he did not practice for this event, he did just fine. The next singer was Dr. Fawad Ahmed who is studying music and this was his first major test. We were also lucky to hear Mrs. Kadambari Adesh's melodic voice and it was pure joy listening to her husband playing the tabla. She is a music instructor and Dr. Fawad is one of her students. Only she can give him the grade he deserves. I think he passed with flying colors. The audience was very impressed by the performance of these artists.

Now it was Ejaz Malik and Javed Massey's turn to entertain the audience with their song and music. Their mystical performance was an instant hit.

Then Sanklap & Pratyush performed solo with tabla and violin and created enchanting music. They are not only good students in college, they are also sharp students of music and are well-trained by their Mom and aunt. Let's give them a big round of applause for their efforts. Despite their busy study schedule, they came to rehearsals few times and agreed to join us on Saturday. That is a true testimony of their passion for music. Let's put our hands together for the brothers.

Thanks to Kamal for joining us for this special occasion. He is also a keen student of music and plays the flute in Asher Afreen's band and knows his instrument and tunes very well. He played the flute so well that I was afraid a cobra would pop up from somewhere and perform its dance. Thank God nothing like that ever happened.

By this time, the audience was in full mood for Usman's arrival on the stage. He is well-known in the community as Mehdi Hasan for his renderings of the songs and ghazals sang by the original and the King of ghazals, Mehdi Hasan. In his youth Usman had worked very closely with the King and had recorded many of his programs. He is an astute student of music and has a penchant for singing ghazals. Although he does not have his spools of recorded tapes anymore, he still maintains the treasure trove of songs from the last four decades in his mind. His mind automatically tunes to the right frequency as he is always singing the ghazals whenever you are with him. It is amazing that without any formal training he still sings so well with his remarkable voice. Even though he was also under the weather, he performed very well on Saturday.

At about 11:40 pm, we had to take a short break for our special guest of the night, Ahmed Faruqi. This was the surprise which I had promised our guests. He thrilled the crowd with the famous movie songs and wowed the audience with his beautiful voice and effervescent style.

The next person to grace the stage was Tausif Ahmed who is well known in the community for his sweet voice. He usually recites n'ats and has a very impressive voice. He sang few ghazals for the audience and kept them entertained.

The audience and the guests were very impressed by the talents of the singers and they thoroughly enjoyed the show. Even though none of the singers were professional entertainers, they did very well in their own right. They love and appreciate music and for them it is a passion. We are glad they were there on Saturday to perform for us and keep us entertained for hours. And I am glad each of you enjoyed this unique program.

Since the night was still young and everyone was energized, Usman returned to the stage and sang few more ghazals for the audience. Finally, it was Nadim Faruqui's turn to conclude the program with his performance. Although he was struggling with the cold and cough and his voice box was not fully cooperating with him, he managed to sing few ghazals in his raspy voice and the audience loved it.

The night of melody and music finally came to an end at 12:30 am. The guests departed with fond memories of this special occasion with the songs and music still resonating in their minds and the ghazals, songs, and music will keep vibrating in our minds for a long time.

I would like to thank all the guests and the performers for their participation. It was a magical and an electrifying night. The violin, harmonium, tabla, and the flute set the perfect rhythm and the tone and the singers' voices kept the ears of the audience fully tuned. No musical program is ever complete without a good sound system. Let's thank Farrukh for managing the controlling the acoustics.

This was the first major event at *Ashiana Banquet Hall*. It met our needs and it is a great place for other community events as well. *Iqwan-e Urdu* members are encouraged to utilize the services of **BBQ Tonight** and their newly built facility for their functions. We like to thank our sponsor **Crunchiez Frozen Desserts** for providing the delicious sweet treats. It is a new business in town that offers a wide array of frozen treats. Please support our sponsors. If you find them on Facebook, please like their page. It just takes less than a second to click, "like." And if you appreciate what *Iqwan-e Urdu* is doing in your community, a like on Facebook will be appreciated.





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