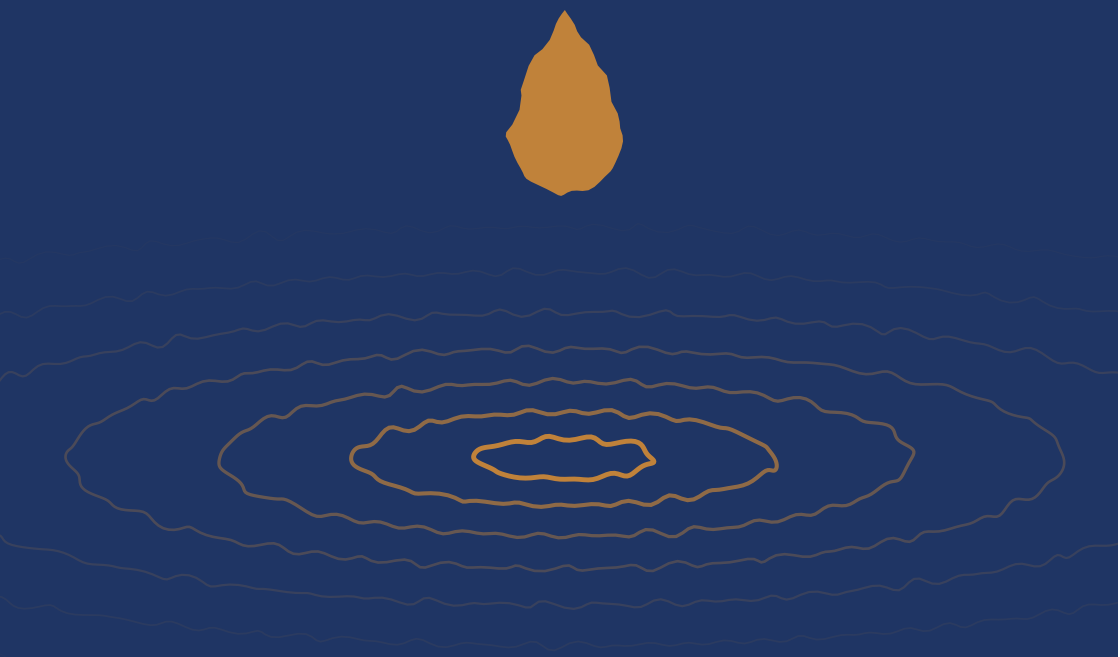


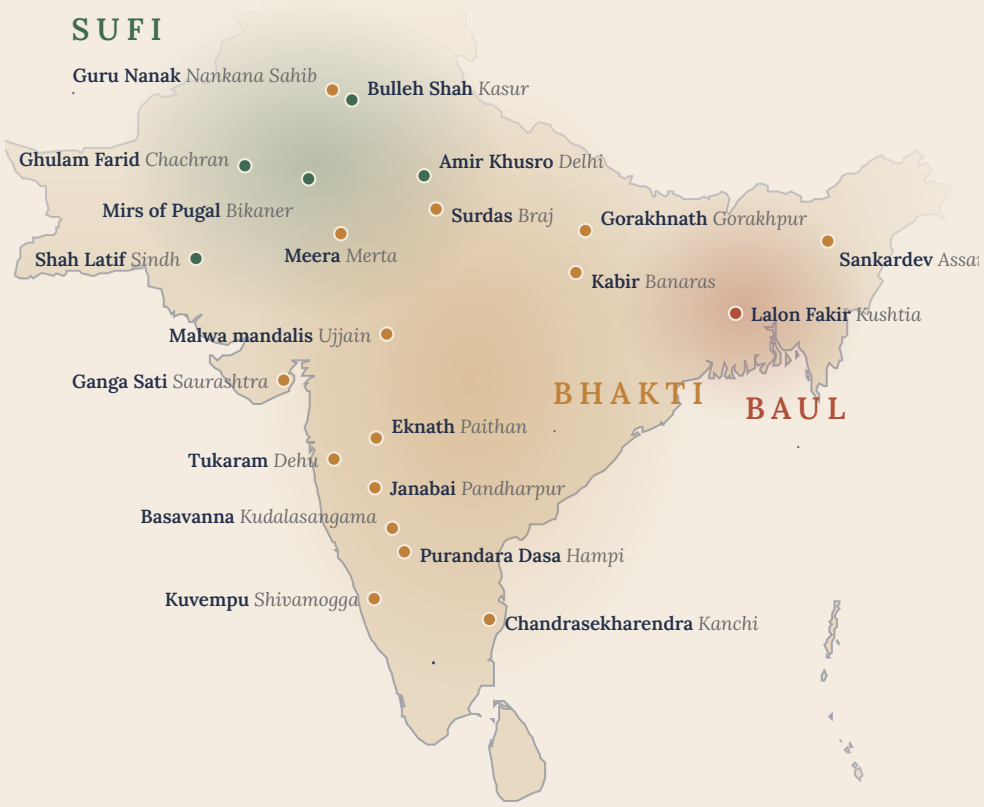
कबीरा कुआं एक है

Bangalore Kabir Festival

SONGS OF THE FESTIVAL

WHERE THE SONGS COME FROM

From Indus to Padma



SUFI
In the west, from Sindh to Punjab, the qalandars and qawwals sing of the Beloved found in every face.

BHAKTI
From Rajasthan and Gujarat to Maharashtra, Karnataka and Assam, saint-poets sing of a god who needs no priest.

BAUL
In the east, the wandering minstrels of Bengal sing of the 'man of the heart'.

This map is for representation and the saints shown are few of the many in the country.

Many Paths, one truth

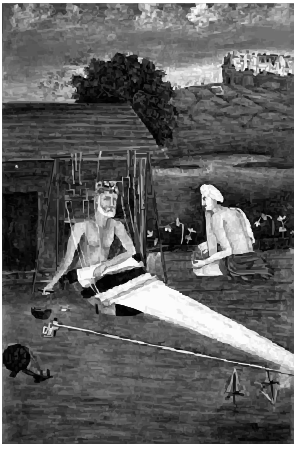
Different centuries. Different languages. Different cultures. But same questions, : all of it converging in one.

A weaver in Banaras, a Sufi in Kasur, a fakir in Bengal. They never met, yet they sang the same truth: God is not locked in a temple or a mosque but lives within us, and love is bigger than caste or creed. We are fascinated by how these voices meet.

From one generation to the next, this timeless wisdom has travelled across centuries and regions. Deep, yet so simple. This is *lok sangeet*, the music of the people: their language, and the wisdom of their own lived experience.

The Bangalore Kabir Festival is our humble effort, to celebrate this universal truth and bring much needed harmony to our community.

Bhakti, Sufi, Baul: many families of folk singers have kept this tradition alive. For nearly a thousand years this river has kept flowing, spreading love and kindness.



BHAKTI



SUFI



BAUL

ACROSS THE CENTURIES

Nine hundred years, one conversation

1100 **Gorakhnath** *Nath yogi*

Basavanna *Vachana, Karnataka*

1200

Janabai *Pandharpur*

Namdev *Maharashtra*

1300 **Amir Khusro** *Delhi*

1400

Kabir *Banaras*

Sankardev *Assam*

Guru Nanak *Punjab · Sikh Guru*

1500 **Surdas** *Braj*

Meera *Rajasthan*

Purandara Dasa *Vijayanagara*

1600

Tukaram *Maharashtra*

1700 **Shah Latif** *Sindh*

Bulleh Shah *Punjab*

1800 **Lalon Fakir** *Bengal*

Khwaja Ghulam Farid *Cholistan*

Ganga Sati *Gujarat*

1900

Kuvempu *Karnataka*

Chandrasekharendra Saraswati *Kanchi*

2026

You, tonight *Bengaluru*

LOVE

Meda ishq vi toon

You are my ardour · Ghulam Farid

THE GOD WITHIN

Moko kahan dhoondhe re bande

Where do you search for me, seeker? I'm with in you · Kabir

WHAT PASSES, WHAT REMAINS

Sthaavarakkalivuntu, jangamakkalivilla

What stands will fall; what moves will not · Basavanna

THE CROSSING

Pare loye jao amay

Take me across · Lalon Fakir

ONENESS

Jyoti mein jyoti milaun ji

Into the Light, my light I shall merge · Gorakhnath

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LISTEN

Every song in this booklet, in one playlist.

Scan the code to open it on YouTube.

Guruji Main To Ek Niranjan

Guru, I meditate only on the Formless

GORAKHNATH · HINDI

> The great yogi of the Nath tradition refuses rivers, temples and idols. Every place of pilgrimage, he says, is already inside the body.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Guruji main to ek Niranjan dhyaun ji, Dooje ke sang nahin jaun ji.	*Guruji, upon the One, the Formless, I meditate,* *I will not go along with another.*
Ganga na jaun ji main, Jamuna na jaun ji main, Na koi teerath nahaun ji, Adsath teerath hain ghat bheetar, Waahi mein mal-mal nahaun ji.	*To Ganga I shall not go,* *to Yamuna I shall not go,* *At no pilgrimage shall I bathe.* *The sixty-eight sacred pilgrimage sites lie within this very body;* *There, I cleanse myself, again and again.*
Patti na todun ji, patthar na poojun ji main, Na koi deval jaun ji, Ban-ban ki main lakdi na todun, Na koi jhaad sataun ji.	*No leaf shall I pluck,* *no stone shall I worship,* *No temple shall I visit.* *From the forests, no wood shall I cut,* *Nor shall I cause suffering to any tree.*
Kahe Gorakh ji, ho suno Machchhendar main, Jyoti mein jyoti milaun ji, Satguru ke main sharan gaye se, Aavagaman mitaun ji, Dooje ke sang nahin jaun ji.	*Says Gorakh Ji,* *"Listen, O Matsyendra,* *Into the Divine Light, my light I shall merge.* *Having sought refuge in the True Guru,* *I shall transcend the cycle of birth and return.* *I will not go along with another."*

Ullavaru Shivalayava Maduvaru

My body is the temple

BASAVANNA · KANNADA · VACHANA

> Twelfth-century Kalyana. The rich build stone temples; a poor man answers that his own body is the shrine, and only what moves will last.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Ullavaru shivaalayava maaduvaru! Naanena maaduve? Badavanayya!	*Those who have money build temples for Shiva!* *What can a poor man like me build?*
Enna kaale kamba, dehave degula, Shirave honna kalashavayya!	*My legs are pillars, my body is the shrine,* *My head is the golden pinnacle!*
Kudalasangamadeva kelayya, Sthaavarakkalivuntu, jangamakkalivilla!	*Hear me, O Lord Kudalasangama!* *There is destruction for what stands,* *but not for what moves!*

✦

Enna Kayava Dandigeya Madayya

Make my body your instrument

BASAVANNA · KANNADA · VACHANA

> Not flowers, not incense: the whole self offered up as a tambura for the divine to play.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Enna kaayava dandigeya maadayyaa, Enna shirava soreya maadayya, Enna narava tantiya maadayyaa, Enna berala kaddiya maadayya,	*Make my body the stem of the instrument.* *Make my head its resonating gourd.* *Make my nerves its strings.* *Make my fingers its plucking sticks.*
Battisa raagava maadayyaa, Uradalotti baarisu, Kudalasangamadeva!	*Play the thirty-two ragas through me.* *Press it to your chest and play,* *O Kudalasangama!*

Pani Mein Meen Pyasi

The fish is thirsty in water

KABIR · HINDI

> Kabir laughs at us: a fish dying of thirst in the river, a deer searching the forest for the musk it carries in its own body.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Paani mein meen piyaasi, mohi sun sun aavat haansi	*The fish is thirsty in water!* *I laugh when I hear it.*
Aatamgyaan binaa nar bhatake, koi Mathuraa koi Kaashi Jaise mriga naabhi kasturi, ban ban phirat udaasi	*Without self-knowledge you wander:* *what use Mathura or Kashi?* *The deer has musk in its belly,* *yet roams the forest desperately.*
Jal vich kamal kamal vich kaliyaan, taapar bhanvar nivaasi So man bas trayalok bhayo hai, yati sati sanyaasi	*Lotus in water, buds in the lotus,* *and the bee dwells on this flower.* *The mind, mastered, embraces all worlds* *and becomes a true renunciant.*
Jaako dhyaan dhare vidhi harihar, munijan sahas athaasi So tere ghat maahin biraaje, param purush avinaasi	*He whom even Hari contemplates,* *and countless other yogis,* *that one sits in your very body,* *the supreme, undying being.*
Hai haazir tehi door dikhaave, door ki baat niraasi Kahain Kabir suno bhai saadho, guru bin bharam na jaasi	*What is right here, you call far away;* *all talk of 'far away' is fruitless.* *Kabir says, listen, seeker:* *only the guru can shatter illusion.*

II

Longing

The way is long, the home is far, and the walking is the song.

Pare Loye Jao Amay

Take me across

LALON FAKIR · BENGALI · BAUL

> Evening at a river ghat in Bengal. The boat is the guru, the far bank is the beloved, and the singer has nothing to offer but his longing.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Pare loye jao amay Ami opar hoye boshe aachi Ohe doyamoy	*Take me across.* *I am sitting here, waiting,* *O kindhearted one.*
Ami eka roilam ghate Bhanu she boshilo pate Thoma bine khor shongotte Na dekhi upai	*I sit here alone by the steps of the water.* *The sun is setting.* *Without you my heart aches in tremendous sadness;* *I see no other way ahead.*
Nai ko amar shadhon bhojon Chirodin bipothe gomon Nam shunechi potheeth pabon Thaithe di duhai	*I know no meditation or prayers.* *I have always walked the wrong paths.* *I have heard you are the saviour of the lost ones,* *so I call for you.*
Agothir na dile gothi Oi name rohibe khothi Lalon koi okuler pothi Ke bolibe thomai	*If you don't show the way to the wanderer,* *it will be a shame to your name.* *Lalon says, who would call you* *the Lord of the vastness, then?*

Naiharwa Hum Ka Na Bhave

My parents' home does not please me

KABIR · HINDI

> The soul as a young bride, restless in her parents' house, longing for the Beloved's town where no one comes and goes.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Naiharwa hum ka na bhaave Saai ki nagri param ati sundar, jahaan koi jaaye na aave	*I find no joy in my parents' house.* *My Beloved's town is most beautiful,* *yet nobody goes or comes from there.*
Chaand suraj jahaan pawan na paani, ko sandes pahunchaave Darad yeh saai ko sunaave	*There is no moon, sun, wind or water there.* *Then who will take my message?* *Who will tell my pain to my Beloved?*
Aage chaalo panth nahin soojhe, peechhe dosh lagaave Kehi bidhi sasure jaaun mori sajni, biraha jor jaraave Vishai ras naach nachaave	*There is no visible path to move forward,* *and I blame the past for it.* *How should the bride reach the Beloved's house?* *The pangs of separation burn inside;* *duality makes me dance to its tune.*
Bin satguru aapno nahin koi, jo yeh raah bataave Kahat Kabir suno bhai saadho, sapne mein preetam aave Tapan yeh jiya ki bujhaave	*There is none but the True Guru, who is mine,* *who can show the way.* *Says Kabir, listen, O seeker:* *your Beloved will come as in a dream.* *That alone will quench the thirst of your heart.*

III

Borderless

Shade, grain and friendship: nothing here is meant to be kept.

Vrikshan Se Mati Le

Learn from the trees

SURDAS · BRAJ

> The blind poet of Braj points at the most ordinary teacher of all: a tree that gives shade to everyone and fruit even to those who throw stones.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Vrikshan se mati le, man tu vrikshan se mati le	*Learn wisdom from the trees,* *O mind, learn from the trees.*
Kaate vaako krodh na karahin, seenchat na karahin neh	*Even when cut, they do not feel anger;* *even when watered, they do not grow attached.*
Dhoop sahat apne sir upar, aur ko chhaanh karet	*They endure the scorching sun on their own heads,* *yet give shade to others.*
Jo vaahi ko paathar chalaave, taahi ko phal det	*Even to those who throw stones at them,* *they offer fruit in return.*
Dhanya-dhanya ye par-upkaari, vritha manuj ki deh	*Blessed, blessed are these selfless beings;* *the human body is wasted if it does not do the same.*
Surdas prabhu kahaan lagi barnaun, harijan ki mati le	*Surdas says, how can I describe their greatness?* *O mind, take on the mind of God's true devotees.*

Ragi Tandira

Have you brought ragi?

PURANDARA DASA · KANNADA · DASA PADA

> A wandering mendicant's pun: 'ragi' is millet, and '-agi' means 'having become'. The alms he asks for is the kind of person you become.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Ragi tandira bhikshake ragi tandira Yogyaragi bhogyaragi bhagyavantaragi nivu	*Have you brought ragi as alms, have you brought ragi?* *May you be upright, may you know joy,* *may you be fortunate.*
Annadanava maduvaragi annachatravannittavaragi Anyavarteya bittavaragi anudina bhajaneya maduvaragi	*May you be one who feeds others freely,* *who sets up houses of free food,* *who leaves aside idle talk,* *and sings the name of God each day.*
Matapitaranu seviparagi papakarmava bittavaragi Ritiya balanu baluvaragi neetimargadali khyataragi	*May you serve father and mother,* *forsake sinful actions,* *lead a disciplined life,* *and be known for just deeds.*
Kamakrodhava alidavaragi nemanityava maduvaragi Ramanamava japisuvaragi premadi kunikunidaduvaragi	*May you be free of lust and anger,* *keep your daily practice,* *chant the name of Rama,* *and dance and dance out of pure love.*
Siriramanana dina neneyuvaragi gurutige bahoranthavaragi Karedare bhavavanu niguvaragi purandara vittalana seviparagi	*May you remember Lakshmi's consort each day,* *bow before the teacher,* *cross the sea of worldly life when called,* *and serve Purandara Vittala.*

Meda Ishq Vi Toon

You are my ardour

KHWAJA GHULAM FARID · SIRAIKI · SUFIYANA KALAM

A Sufi of the Cholistan desert names everything he has, his faith, his prayer, his pain and his henna, and finds the Beloved in each.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Meda ishq vi toon, meda yaar vi toon Meda deen vi toon, eeman vi toon	*You are my ardour, my friend,* *my faith, my creed.*
Meda jism vi toon, meda rooh vi toon Meda qalb vi toon, jind jaan vi toon	*You are my body, you are my spirit,* *my heart, my soul.*
Meda zikr vi toon, meda fikr vi toon Meda zouq vi toon, wajdan vi toon	*You're my remembrance, my contemplation,* *my tasting and my ecstasy.*
Meda sanwal mithra, shaam saloona Mun mohan janaan vi toon	*You are my love, my sweet, my darling,* *my favourite and my soulmate!*
Meda murshid haadi, peer tareeqat Shaikh haqaa'iq daan vi toon	*You're my spiritual preceptor, my guide,* *my Shaykh and my Enlightened One.*
Meda aas ummed te khattaya wattaya Takia maan taran vi toon	*You are my hope, my wish, my gains, my losses,* *all I lean on, my pride, my deliverance.*
Meda husn te bhaag suhaag vi toon Meda bakht te naam nishaan vi toon	*You are my beauty, my fate and fortune,* *my luck, my name, my fame.*
Medi mehdni kajal misaag vi toon Medi surkhi beera paan vi toon	*You are my henna, my collyrium,* *my rouge, my betel-leaf!*
Medi wehshat josh junoon vi toon Meda garya aah o faghan vi toon	*You are my terror, my passion, my madness,* *my crying and my lamentation.*
Je yaar Farid qabool karay Srikaar vi toon, sultaan vi toon	*If, O Beloved, you accept Farid,* *you are my Sovereign and my Sultan.*

Tere Ishq Nachaya

Your love made me dance

BULLEH SHAH · PUNJABI · KAFI

> Bulleh Shah, a Syed, took a gardener of lower caste, Shah Inayat, as his master, and danced in the streets to win back his love.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Tere ishq ne dera mere andar keeta Bhar ke zeher payala main taan aape peeta Jhabde wahudi tabiba nahin te main mar gaiyaan Tere ishq nachaiyaan kar key thaiyaa thaiyaa	*Falling in love with you* *was like taking a sip of poison.* *Come quickly, my healer,* *or I die.* *Your love has made me dance like mad.*
Ais ishq di jhangi wich mor bulenda Sanu qibla ton kaaba sohna yaar disenda Sanu ghayal karke pher khabar na laaiyaan Tere ishq nachaiyaan kar key thaiyaa thaiyaa	*A peacock calls in the grove of passion.* *My love is my Qibla, my Kaaba.* *You wounded me and never asked after me.* *Your love has made me dance like mad.*
Bulleh Shah na aounda mainu Inayat de buhe Jisne mainu awaye chole saave te suhe Jaan main maari aye addi mil paya hai vahaiya Tere ishq nachaiyaan kar key thaiyaa thaiyaa	*Bulleh Shah sits* *at Inayat's door,* *who dressed me in green and red,* *And caught me the instant* *I flew from the pad* *Your love has made me dance like mad.*

Zehaal-e-Miskin

Do not overlook my misery

AMIR KHUSRO · PERSIAN AND BRAJ

> Seven hundred years ago, Khusro wove Persian and the local Braj into a single couplet, half a line each: two languages, one longing.

AS IT IS SUNG	WHAT IT MEANS
Zehaal-e-miskin makun taghaful, duraye naina banaye batiyan Ke taab-e-hijran nadaram ay jaan, na leho kahe lagaye chatiyan	*Do not overlook my misery,* *blandishing your eyes and weaving tales.* *My patience is spent, O beloved;* *why do you not take me to your heart?*
Shaban-e-hijran daraz chun zulf, wa roz-e-waslat cho umer kotah Sakhi piya ko jo main na dekhun, to kaise katun andheri ratiyan	*The nights of parting are long as curls,* *the day of union short as life.* *Friend, if I do not see my beloved,* *how will I pass these dark nights?*
Yakayak az dil do chashm-e-jadu, basad farebam baburd taskin Kisay padi hai jo ja sunave, piyare pi ko hamari batiyan	*Suddenly, with a hundred tricks, two* *enchanting eyes* *robbed my heart of its peace.* *Who would care to go and tell* *my darling of my state?*
Chun shama sozan, chun zarra hairan, hamesha giryan be ishq an meh Na nind naina na ang chaina, na aap aaven na bhejen patiyan	*Like a burning candle, like a bewildered* *speck,* *I weep always in the fire of this love.* *Sleepless eyes, restless body;* *the beloved neither comes nor sends a word.*
Bahaq-e-roz-e-visaal-e-dilbar, ke daad mara gharib Khusro Sapet man ke varaye rakhun, jo jaye paun piya ke khatiyan	*For the sake of the day I meet my love,* *who has beguiled poor Khusro so long,* *I will keep my heart gathered and still,* *until I reach my beloved's side.*

The word that stayed with you

SUFI

The Mirs of Pugal

A Muslim family that sings Meera's bhajans.

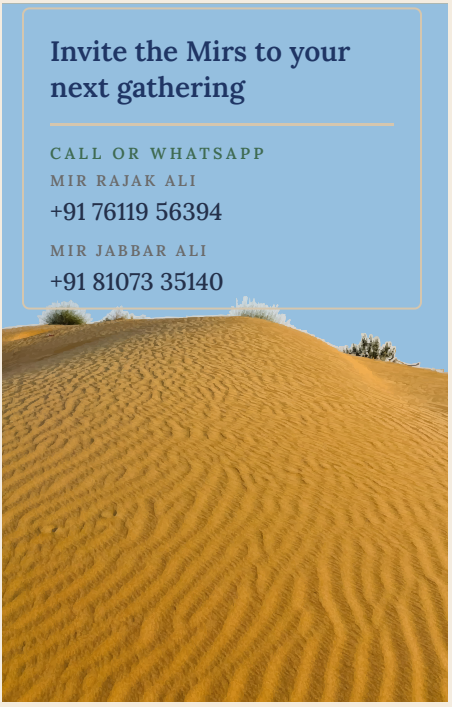
The Mirs are Mirasi, hereditary Muslim musicians from Pugal, a desert town near Bikaner. The word comes from *mīrās*, inheritance: their songs pass from father to son by ear, never from a book.

In one evening, a Mir will sing the Sufi saints Bulleh Shah and Baba Farid, then Meera and Kabir, on harmonium, dholak and manjira. To them it was never two traditions. Love was the only faith.

Once sung for the court of Bikaner, these songs are going quiet. Patronage has faded, and many young Mirs have left music to find other work. A tradition lives only as long as it is heard.







Photographs: Meghal Sharma





पानी भरे अनेक

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Every drop fills the well.

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