

Violinist John Mayer performs

The life and legacy of the ground-breaking Anglo-Indian composer, John Mayer, is to be explored by community groups in Hillingdon with the help of a £69,300 National Lottery grant.

Arts and education charity, Pandit Ram Sahai Sangeet Viyalaya (PRSSV) will digitise music and items from Mayer’s collections for an online archive and run a programme of events and learning activities.

A ground-breaking career

Born in Calcutta in 1930, John Mayer trained in Western and Indian classical music and won a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy. He performed as a violinist with both the London and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras, reportedly calling himself the “first black face in symphony orchestra”.

[quote-Jonathan Mayer, son of John Mayer]"I feel honoured to be able to share my father's work with the community of Hillingdon and beyond."[/quote]

Mayer pioneered a new style of composition, merging Western and Hindustani traditions to create influential compositions that still inspire musicians today. In the mid-1960s with Jamaican-born saxophonist, Joe Harriott, he set up ‘Indo-Jazz Fusions’.

Sharing Mayer’s life and work

Jonathan Mayer, son of John Mayer, said: “Our household in West London was always full of music. I feel honoured to be able to share my father's work with the community of Hillingdon and beyond."

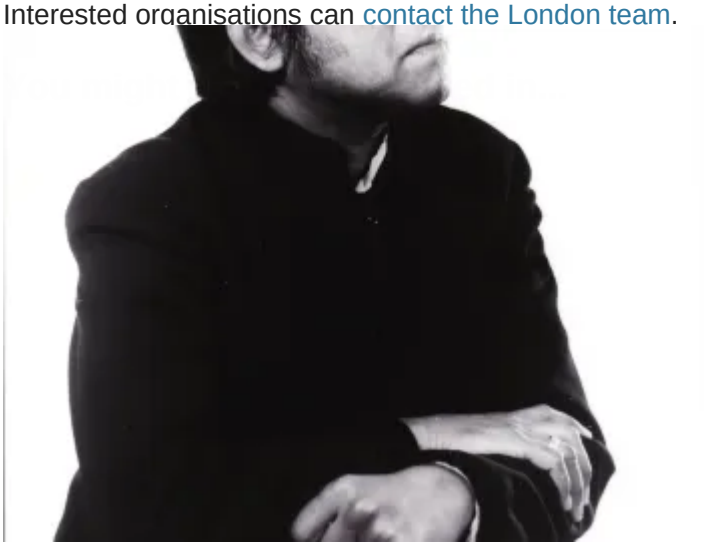
Jonathan will be leading workshops for the public and at local schools, which feature Mayer’s music on their syllabus. Supported by Hillingdon’s Music Hub and Museums Service, the National Lottery funded project will create a new touring exhibition and a learning and events programme across west London for people to learn about Mayer’s life and work.

Hillingdon’s heritage

Stuart Hobley, Head of HLF London, said: “Mayer was an innovative force in British music, whose synthesis of Indian and Western musical techniques still inspires us today. It’s great that National Lottery players’ money can support this project to share his legacy.”

He added: “We’re keen to talk to other heritage projects in Hillingdon about how we can support them to explore different aspects of the borough’s rich history.”

Interested organisations can contact the London team.



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South Asian heritage to be celebrated in Birmingham