

Khan thrills the Cohn

by David Wegenast

Everyone was surprised by the superb Sarod concert on Sunday, October 3rd at the Cohn. Ali Akbar Khan on sarod was accompanied on tabla (drums) by his son, Pranesh and on tamboura by Roop Verma, who later expressed great delight at the warm enthusiasm of the Halifax public for this unusual music. Both ragas they played were received by standing ovations from the house.

Beginning with the meditative evening Raga Medhavi, then following with the joyful morning Raga Sindhu Bhairvi gave the performance a smooth energy build-up for a most jubilant finish.

For most of us, the only Indian music we've ever heard has been Ravi Shankar's sitar. Although similarly a pluck-stringed instrument, the sarod has two important differences. It is not beset with frets but has an unmarked metal neck on which notes can be gracefully slid up and down as on a violin. Secondly, the strings (of which there are about twenty-five) are bridged on a taut skin covering the sound box, rather like a banjo. This does a great deal for the instrument's expressive range, allowing notes to resonate deeper and more clearly. Many of the fast licks had a kind of harshness I've never heard on the sitar. After the concert, Khan explained to me that the sitar is

thought of as a woman (delicate sound) while the sarod is a man (more complex, wide variety of sound).

Perhaps the sarod's fuller sound is best appreciated in the introductory section of the raga, the **alap**. As the tamboura starts up, the air fills with a richness that is solemn and ancient. Ali Akbar Khan tunes his sarod, then gradually tunes the audience, the auditorium and the Halifax night with those first exploring notes that bring everything together for the creation of this one raga right now. A rhythm forms slowly as the raga finds its expression then quickens, flowing with confidence. Both of the ragas played on Sunday night had dialogue sections in which Ali would play a theme that his son would try to duplicate on tabla. Some of the themes were a little too much for Pranesh, but nevertheless, he showed great flexibility considering that he had been playing for only six years and this was only his fourth concert appearance.

The music was only part of an exuberant stage drama. At various times throughout the performance, Pranesh would be tuning his tabla with a silver hammer, dusting them with powder; Ali tuning his sarod and all three performers cuing each other with nods, smiles, and quick touches. The first raga saw Ali break a string on the sarod and stop immediately to fix it, giving his son

a bit of solo work punctuated by the squeaking of a tuning peg.

This concert was first in a four-concert tour, three of which are

in Canada. Khan has been touring for 30 years now and feels that he's getting a bit old, 54, for the hectic pace. He started the Ali Akbar College of Music in California ten years ago and prefers to spend more time with his students than out on tour. We can only hope that the welcome he received here will encourage him to return to Halifax soon.

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Carleton House

by Warren Meek

Members of the Health Professions of Dalhousie University are still without their student facility after 2½ years of planning and organization.

The facility is needed to provide a gathering place for students in the related fields and to provide a greater involvement of the professions and also a place for relaxation and entertainment.

The Carleton House committee held its first meeting of the year on September 29 with all concerned faculties represented. The proceedings over the summer were discussed in rather deep detail. Extracts of that meeting are printed following. Minutes are obtainable in the Student Union Offices and on bulletin boards on the Lower Campus.

University officials are amenable to the proposed facility, with President Hicks heading the list, but due to a rather upset and ragged building problem in the University, priority for the Carleton House is low and can't even get into the rolling barrel of events being bantered back and forth. There are many, many factors playing a part in the non-existence of Carleton House, some of those being the Sports Complex, a new Dental School, a \$1.5 million renovation of the Forrest Building, etc. etc.

There are plans to be incorporated into the Forrest Building, but who knows when that will be. In the meantime, the committee is trying to develop a temporary facility, with its realization being no more than doubtful.

So, as it stands now, Carleton House is still a dream, but a dream with potential.

The Carleton House Committee met on September 29th, 1976. The meeting began at 7:15 p.m. in Seminar Room 3 of the Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building.

Questions were posed as to the renovation of the Forrest Building and the situation of the Temple. It appeared that the lounge facility planned for the Forrest would be ideal, but its realization in the near future was questionable. Rumour has it that renovations might begin by January 1977, to be completed in a year's time.

Members present felt that a temporary facility should be sought with preference being shown for the basement of the Philae Temple as it is apparently under utilized at the moment. Interest was shown in having the temporary facility by the end of 1976. It was suggested that the basement of the temple might not be available, with the proposal that a physical 'house' be sought. Rumour has it that getting a house would be no problem. It was

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