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MUSIC FOR PEACE

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In a bid to address social issues in the country, George Mathew uses music as a tool to bring about the change. *Team Viva* reports

The dynamic New York-based conductor-pianist-teacher, George Mathew has been using his passion and talent for music in order to make a transformative difference in the society. The founder and artistic director of Music for Life International, Mathew says, “Music is not simply the wonderful sound that one enjoys. It is more. It’s supposed to serve people and create a space where they all can come together for a cause.” In a bid to start a new phase in the Global Campaign to eradicate Preventable Cataract Blindness with a target to create 50 Cataract Surgical Backlog Free districts in some of the poorest and most backward parts of India by 2020, Mathew’s Music for Life International and HelpMeSee will perform a series of concerts in the city.

Sharing about how Music for Life International came up, he says, “About eight years ago, along with a group of musicians and supporters of music, we created this social enterprise with a mission to create a social impact through music. We use music in different ways in the socio-economic spectrum for bringing about a societal change.”

In the series of concerts that will feature sarod maestro Amjad Ali Khan, renowned American violinist; Elmira Darvarova and one of the oldest orchestra, Bombay Chamber, will be conducted by George Mathew. On speaking about his experience about working with legendary artistes, he says, “Working with a great artiste is always enlightening. You get insight on not only music but life itself. And, when they come together for a humanitarian cause, it becomes important for them to communicate the message to the listeners and the great artiste knows how to do it.” He is confident that through music, one can bring peace and solidarity.

He believes that with music concerts like such, he wants to add some value to the society. “We are doing this to bring forth the problem of cataract and also solutions for the same. We want to gather a community of supporters through music to make this vision impairment a thing of past,” he explains.

Talking about the music he listens to and his favourite composition, he says, “I listen to all kinds of music. From Western music compositions to Bollywood, I like them all. However, what I’m working on today is my favourite music. Yesterday it was something else and tomorrow it will be something else.”team v