

## Silhouette

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*A space where there is always room, for more than one definition.*

### About The YP Foundation

The YP Foundation (TYPF) in New Delhi has, for the last 7 years, been a leader in building a youth movement for social justice in India. By providing young people with the resources to execute their own initiatives that target social, cultural, economic, legal and environmental issues they are committed to, The YP Foundation is committed to developing the uninhibited expression of young people. TYPF supports young people between the ages of 13 and 28 through a yearlong process to identify problems in their community and design practical solutions that address global issues as well as local challenges. To date, TYPF has worked with 5,000 young people directly, setting up over 150 projects in India.

The YP Foundation (TYPF) is a not for profit organization with a difference – it is entirely run and managed by young people. By providing young people with the resources to execute their own initiatives that target social, cultural, economic, legal and environmental issues they are committed to, The YP Foundation is committed to developing the uninhibited expression of young people.

Our work has received support and recognition from young people, multiple donors, government, organizations and community stakeholders. These include The Ford Foundation, The Global Fund for Children, The International Women's Health Coalition, Students for the Promotion of International Law, UNICEF, UNDP, UNAIDS, The American Embassy, New Delhi, The Ashoka Foundation, IPPF, The Packard Foundation, Companies DELL, Moser Baer, Punj Lloyd and Glaxo Smith Kline amongst others.

### About Silhouette

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Silhouette was established in January 2005 as a programme division of The YP Foundation with the aim of supporting young people's work in the performing and visual arts. By connecting amateur, upcoming and established artists through collaborative projects with young people across the city, Silhouette aims at providing young people a space in the arts where they can develop their creativity, vision and talent. We aim at enabling a dynamic environment that support artistic endeavours and challenge existing moulds to expand the outreach of the arts.

Silhouette's primary intention is to engage larger audiences with learning and experimentation within the arts and make newer forms and concepts accessible to a wider youth audience. Working through the trio spaces of dialogue, performance and management, Silhouette develops and promotes three programme portfolios, Arts Management, Impromptu and The Open House Series that host unique initiatives and ideas developed by diverse young people.

We have received regular support from the India Habitat Centre, The American Embassy, Platform Magazine, News X, Punj Lloyd, Traffic Life Magazine and Hit 95 FM as partners in our various projects.

Silhouette's primary stakeholder is urban city youth, capitalizing on Delhi as a city with a strong university culture, ensuring that our programmes are offered at no expense to young people and provide a critical opportunity for youth from diverse parts of the country to access information, technical skills and platforms to develop and hone their craft.

## Arts Management

Entirely driven and managed by young people, Silhouette's work includes providing critical mentoring and production support to upcoming arts initiatives by young people in their initial phase of establishment. The division focuses primarily on strengthening and expanding the outreach of ventures in theatre, music and dance.

Key projects under this venture include:

- The establishment of Wide Aisle Productions, one of Delhi's youth led non-competitive university theatre production companies and their maiden venture, Reader by Ariel Dorfman.
- The establishment of The Black Cow Company and their maiden venture
- Concert Production for India's largest choir, Artists Unlimited and the launch of their first album, En Route.
- The establishment of the At Home Concert Series, in partnership with Prospect Advisory and Management. The yearlong project created a unique platform for original music in India, featuring the work of over 10 artist groups from across the country in a monthly concert series. The concert series focused on detailed curation, highlighting concert production as a key visual element to engaging upcoming original music in India with wider audiences.
- As part of UNICEF and The YP Foundation's project working with child rights and child domestic labour, Silhouette organized a music concert for school children called 'Children for Change' on the same.
- Play production for Caathaayatra, a theatre company that challenges notions of gender and sexuality by developing original scripts and performances.
- The establishment of The Yellow Brick Road, an experimental dance production that explores combining multiple western and Indian dance forms with traditional Christian storytelling. (Ongoing)

## The Open House Series

The Open House Series is an innovative conversation space designed for young people and amateur artists to explore the many faces of the arts. Designed primarily to address the lack of cost effective forums and technical educational platforms in India where mainstream youth can train, engage and work with the experimental arts.

The Open House Series designs workshops, clinics, open forum discussions and training sessions.

Our aim is to facilitate questions, queries and engage young people who are interested or working in the arts, to meet and work with critics, artists, technicians, professionals and educationalists. The space has been hosted at The Attic and The India Habitat Centre, New Delhi so far.

Sessions of the Open House have showcased individual expressions of creativity through music, theatre, photography and art amongst other different mediums. This space has been created to question, explore, reinvent, challenge and reveal perspectives. Open House projects include:

- A collaborative research project with The International Youth Congress in Rome and the Vatsalya Study Center, New Delhi on '*Music as a Language of Culture in India*'.
- '*What Is Art?*' A public dialogue that explored the commercial and aesthetic debates between professional artists who work with sound and/or music and younger emerging artists, exploring the financial and infrastructural feasibility of careers in sound and music in Delhi. Organizations featured: Khoj.
- '*Performances in Dialogue*' - A public dialogue on the possible career explorations for young people in theatre, highlighting challenges faced and successful strategies implemented to address the same.
- '*Why not Comics?*' A partnership with Sarai and the FIRC (French Information and Resource Center) at the International Book Fair 2008, introducing some of India's best known graphic novelists and comic artists to young people, in a collaborative exploration of the current and future state of the comic book culture in India.
- In 2008, The Open House Series expanded to working with school students from various schools across Delhi and Sonipath, Haryana on '*Music Education and Original Music in India*', in a two-part workshop series with 5 schools that introduces to young people today upcoming and established artists developing original music in India.
  - The partnership brings together school administrations, university peer educators and school students in a space where they can access information on improving existing music curricula and get introduced to platforms and skills for original music that our target youth group would find hard to access otherwise.

## Impromptu

Impromptu is a space to develop and expose distinctive initiatives in the arts, all of which must escape the regular rigmarole of the arts and bring new perspectives, techniques and genres to the fore.

Its specialty is that it is needs driven and was developed in response to the increasing requests for technical, resource and skills support made by young people from across the city. Impromptu works primarily in music and theatre, with occasional project explorations in different genres.

Key Impromptu projects feature a focus on:

- *The Art of Script Reading* – A project directed by Stephen Marazzi, produced in association with the Public Affairs Office of the American Centre. The Art of Script Reading featured ‘Out of a Hat’ as its maiden performance and is today a successful independent community shared project across New Delhi by all ages.
- *Traditions in Jazz & Hindustani Classical* – A collaborative public performance project featuring an ensemble of 12 young artistes, exploring the basic traditional structures of Jazz & Hindustani Classical and where young musicians from both schools of learning meet and work together.
- Curators of ‘*The 15 Minute Fringe Festival*’ in December 2006 for Kri Foundation and Kat Katha, featuring over 18 experimental and avant-garde artistes from myriad fields within the arts. The festival featured
- ‘*Death*’ and ‘*God*’ – *A Woody Allen Festival* - Dedicated to the dramatic works of Woody Allen, the festival featured interpretations of Allen’s work, performed by Wide Aisle Productions and Verbum, the dramatics society of Sri Venkateswara College.
- ‘*The Barn Owl’s Abandoned Opera*’ – A collaborative project with Graphic Novelist Sarnath Banerjee and young actors at The YP Foundation to produce a dramatic interpretation of the graphic novel – *The Barn Owl’s Wondrous Capers*. The project was one its first in Delhi, where young people translated the graphic novel to experimental forms of theatre.
- 2008 and 2009 open a space in Impromptu where artists are invited to conduct demonstrations and clinics with young people, ranging from songwriting, genre based experimentation to creative musical exploration, both with instruments and in theory.
  - *Performance Clinics* so far have featured the following artists:
    - Original Music – Them Clones (Rock), The Raghu Dixit Project (Folk), Rahul Ram (Indian Ocean).
    - Theatre – Chicago Based theatre troupe Pegasus Players (in partnership with The American Embassy).
    - Puppetry – Varun Narain (Gender & Sexuality with his performance ‘Petroleum’).

### *Special Initiative*

#### **An Open House Series & Impromptu Collaborative**

**The Arts Education Project** started in 2008 by Silhouette hopes to provide an overview for young people about music in Delhi, comprising of bands and performers, institutions and organizations.

The project provides artistes a space to perform/showcase their work through theatre productions, music ensembles, solo artistes and art exhibitions, focusing on creating a live interaction between both groups through workshops, discussions, demonstrations, concerts etc.

Silhouette has focused on creating stronger platforms to showcase young artistes and developing resources to exchange information and raise awareness through Music Education, using both Impromptu and The Open House Series. The project is modeled on creating awareness about the different genres of music, musicians, bands, ensembles, music schools/institutes, recording studios, sound engineers, record labels working in India today.

### **The Way Forward**

As Silhouette moves forward, key projects on its agenda are:

- Mapping Young People in Music and Theatre – A research study in Delhi that assess the strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the work being done by young people in non mainstream music and theatre. The study will influence the working agenda of Silhouette in the next 3 years.
- Expanding the scope of The Open House Series and Impromptu series by:
  - Developing meaningful partnerships that connect valuable existing work to newer youth audiences,
  - Increasing the participation of technicians working with Music and Theatre
  - Developing platforms for existing work in the arts (traditional, local as well as international) to be made accessible to wider audiences of young people.

### **Contact Us**

To read more about our work, visit [www.theyouthparliament.blogspot.com](http://www.theyouthparliament.blogspot.com) or contact Ishita Chaudhry, Managing Trustee at [theypfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:theypfoundation@gmail.com)