

VIRASAT' 26 – EVENT REPORT
SPIC MACAY, Daulat Ram College Chapter
27–29 March 2026 University of Delhi

Introduction

The Virasat'26 series, organised by the SPIC MACAY chapter of Daulat Ram College, was a three-day celebration of India's rich cultural heritage. True to SPIC MACAY's vision of connecting youth with classical arts, the event brought together dance, cinema, and heritage to offer students an immersive cultural experience. Through performances, discussions, and exploration, the series encouraged both intellectual engagement and artistic appreciation.

Day 1: Kathak Recital by Padma Shri Shovana Narayan

27 March 2026

The inaugural day featured a captivating Kathak recital by renowned dancer Padma Shri Shovana Narayan, whose performance reflected both technical mastery and emotional depth. Accompanied by eminent musicians, Shri Madho Prasad (vocal), Shri Mahavir Gangani (pakhawaj), Shri Ustad Shakeel Ahmed Khan (tabla), and Shri Azhar Shakeel (violin), the recital offered a rich, multi-layered artistic experience. The event commenced with a Saraswati invocation, followed by a formal welcome and lamp-lighting ceremony in the presence of distinguished dignitaries. The anchors introduced Kathak as a dynamic blend of tatkaar (footwork), chakkars (spins), and abhinaya (expression), rooted in storytelling traditions.

Shovana Narayan's introduction to Kathak was both scholarly and engaging. She traced its origins to the kathakars storytellers of North India and highlighted its evolution into a classical form guided by texts like the Natya Shastra. She emphasised the spiritual dimension of dance, describing the stage as a sacred space and performance as an act of devotion. The recital included several expressive gath bhav sequences, portraying mythological and symbolic narratives. Notable performances included: Krishna as Arjuna's charioteer: A symbolic dialogue between Shiva's damru and Krishna's flute. The Mayur (peacock) sequence. A powerful depiction of the Chheerharan episode, linking it to contemporary societal issue. The concluding Buddha gath bhav, portraying transformation through Yashodhara's perspective, stood out for its emotional intensity.

and philosophical depth. The performance seamlessly moved from technical brilliance to profound storytelling, leaving the audience deeply engaged. The session concluded with a vote of thanks and a group photograph.

Day 2: Cinema Classics – Vertigo

28 March 2026

The second day featured a screening and discussion of *Vertigo*, a landmark psychological thriller directed by Alfred Hitchcock. The session was graced by Dr. Snehlata, Professor of History department, Daulat Ram College having proficiency in Cinema, whose insights enriched the audience's understanding of film as a serious academic discipline. The film explores themes of illusion, obsession, and psychological instability through its protagonist, whose perception of reality becomes increasingly unreliable. It challenges viewers to question the boundaries between reality and imagination.

Dr. Snehlata's analysis highlighted:

The role of camera techniques, colour symbolism, and sound in shaping narrative. The psychological tension created through slow pacing rather than action. The portrayal of patriarchal control, particularly the male protagonist's attempt to reshape Judy into an idealised identity. The influence of the film on global cinema. She also drew parallels with Indian films such as *Pyaasa*, *Madhumati*, and *Ittefaq*, noting how similar themes of identity, illusion, and tragedy recur across cultures while maintaining originality. The session concluded with an engaging discussion, followed by a vote of thanks. The event successfully demonstrated how cinema functions as both art and critical discourse.

Day 3: Heritage Walk – Hauz Khas Fort

29 March 2026

The final day featured a heritage walk at Hauz Khas Fort, guided by Dr Aradhana Sinha. The walk provided participants with a detailed understanding of the site's historical, architectural, and cultural significance. Originally constructed during the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, the complex functioned as a prominent madrasa. The architecture reflects a blend of functionality and aesthetic design, with features such as: Jali work and projecting balconies for ventilation. Column-and-beam structures influenced by Rajasthani styles. Student cells designed for practical living and learning. The tomb of Firoz Shah, built in the 14th century, stands as the central structure, connecting the madrasa wings. Its inscriptions, floral motifs, and dome highlight the artistic and

religious sensibilities of the time. The Hauz (water tank), from which the complex derives its name, added both beauty and utility to the site. The surrounding gardens, described in historical accounts, further enhanced its cultural richness.

The walk emphasised how such monuments serve as living records of history, reflecting social values, educational priorities, and architectural innovation. It also highlighted the relevance of climate-responsive design in historical structures, offering lessons for contemporary architecture.

Conclusion

The Virasat'26 series successfully fulfilled its objective of bringing students closer to India's cultural heritage through diverse mediums dance, cinema, and architecture. Each day offered a unique perspective, blending artistic experience with intellectual engagement.

The event was made possible through the collective efforts of the SPIC MACAY DRC team, volunteers, and institutional support. It not only celebrated tradition but also inspired students to appreciate and preserve cultural legacy in a modern context. The series concluded on a note of gratitude towards the artists, speakers, organisers, and participants who contributed to making Virasat'26 a meaningful and memorable experience.

Convener

Prof (Dr) Darshan Singh

SPIC MACAY Daulat Ram College

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