

## ghara

Made out of clay, the 'ghara' is round in shape, with a short neck and an opening at the top. Striking one hand on the sidewalls produces rhythms, while the other hand is hit over the mouth, producing a deep booming sound. The ghara is rotated slowly while playing to ensure that hitting the walls constantly at the same spot does not cause it to break. The 'chimta' or 'ektara' usually accompanies the ghara.

## sitar

Amir Khusrau invented this instrument in the fourteenth century.

The sitar is made of a large dry hollow gourd ('kaddu') and the fingerboard is made of two pieces of wood. The neck is hollow and consists of a flat wooden fingerboard glued to a convex piece of wood. The fingerboard is fixed to the gourd with another piece of wood. Nickel-plated, movable, brass frets are tied to the fingerboard with gut. Two bridges, made either of bone or ivory, are placed on the soundboard; a large one for the upper strings and a smaller one for the sympathetic strings. A 'mizrab' or steel plectrum is used for playing a sitar. It is made of steel wire and is worn on the forefinger of the right hand, rather like a ring.



**lok virsa**, meaning 'cultural voyage' is a project, which will target Muslim communities' heritage in the West Midlands. This project will raise an awareness and understanding of the cultural heritage and legacy of diverse Muslim communities living in the West Midlands. One can notice a great cultural heritage influx from east to west and west to east is emerging from indigenous Muslim cultural heritage. Thus, it is important for Muslim communities to understand the differences in cultural heritage and how they can play a positive role in the success and progression of their own, while respecting others' heritage.

We will be working with diverse Muslim communities in the West Midlands by holding heritage training workshops, carrying out training to collect the primary source materials (for example photographs, artefacts and stories), which will help us to design and produce publication, website and CD ROM. The stories of the role models who have influenced a great deal of cultural heritage in the West Midlands will be used.

lok virsa will transform the image of the diverse Muslim communities within other wider communities and will highlight the positive input and contribution of Muslim heritage into the life style of West Midlands. Our past is central to our future. Every individual has their own particular heritage and historical roots and origins, for example arts, sports, music, festivals, and motifs.

lok virsa will have a role in celebrating the city's multicultural and diverse communities' heritage by strengthening links and developing a network with local people. This will be achieved through a series of seminars on community heritage using core transferable skills centred around cultural heritage.

symphony hall  
birmingham

Supported by the  
Heritage Lottery Fund



Birmingham City Council

lok virsa

لوك ورسا

cultural  
voyage

## rauf 'ali' shah

was born in a Rawalpindi; village 'Manakra' in 1950. Ali emigrated to Redditch in 1965 to join his father, Arif Shah.

Rauf Ali Shah brought the instruments with him in 1968, learnt to play the Sitar, teamed up with ABDUL WARID who played the Ghara and began performing for friends and community events in Redditch, Birmingham, Coventry, Lye and Stourbridge.

## hassan shah

was born in 1957 and joined his brother Rauf Ali Shah in 1971. Having a beautiful singing voice and acquiring good skills in playing the Ghara (which is also called Matka); Hassan became a major influence on the future development of the group. Since 1971 Hassan has been performing in major events and gatherings. He has created a new style of playing the Ghara which encompasses the power of the rings and the base, and also the flexibility, which creates and defuses many moods of the Sitar. He has worked comfortably with Musicians visiting from Pakistan. Many young people in the UK have learnt Ghara from him. Hassan recently had recorded a signature tune for a local Radio programme in Worcestershire.



# programme

**6:00 pm**

Reception and Refreshments

**6:15 pm**

Preview of the Exhibition  
"Home and Away"

**6:30 pm**

Welcome  
Makhdoom Chishti and Paul Keene

**6:35 pm**

Launch of "Lok Virsa" by  
Lord Mayor



'Live for Others' Tahir Chishti



**6:40 pm**

Heritage Lottery Fund  
Michelle Christie, Development Officer  
Christopher Tomlin, Development Manager

**6:50 pm**

Irish Music  
Talk on Peace, Tom Pritty

**7:05 pm**

Traditional and Classical Music  
Sitar and Ghara,  
Rauf Ali Shah and Hussan Shah

**7:55 pm**

Vote of thanks, Abdul Majid

**8:00 pm**

End



'Live for Others' Tahir Chishti