

# Her love for the arts

US-based **Anita Kulkarni** tells **Tania Roy** about her upcoming dance-music fusion show *Panorama*, her passion for arts and why she calls Pune her second home

Pic: Anand Chaihi

can't draw a line between art and architecture. In fact, I feel arts is closely related to architecture," says US-based architect-cum-artist Anita Kulkarni, who right now is in Pune putting together her show *Panorama*. Conceptualising, directing, producing as well as doing the music and vocals, Kulkarni is deeply involved with every aspect of this visual spectacle, which will unfold at Yashwantrao Natya Sabhagruha on February 7 from 9 to 11.30 pm.

Explaining the show, she says, "It's a fusion of music and dance comprising Kathak, Bharatnatyam, contemporary and ballet. Almost 25



**A GLIMPSE:** Sheetal Kolwalkar and Sonia Parchure will be performing at *Panorama*

artists will be showcasing their creativity on stage, including Bharatnatyam exponent Parimal Phadke and Kathak danseuses Sheetal Kolwalkar and Sonia Parchure (who is the latest addition to the show)."

Ever since its inception, *Panorama* — so far, it has had two shows in Mumbai — has been evolving. "Almost 80 per cent of the format is constant, but rest of the programme is new. For instance, this time around, we have Sonia and her dancers, who are between 14 and 24 years of age, as part of the Pune show," adds Kulkarni.

Also, Kulkarni and the team have been invited to perform *Panorama* at the *French Festival* this year. The show will take place at Morlaix by the end of April.

## Arts & architecture

Talking about her connect with Pune, Kulkarni says, "Pune is my second home. I was born and raised in Mumbai, and have been living in the US for the past 30 years, but I love Pune. The city has its own charm," says the alumna of Sir J J College of Architecture, Mumbai.



**FOLLOWING HER DREAMS:** Architect, artist, author, painter Anita Kulkarni is devoting more time to the arts

However, for the past three years, architecture has taken a backseat. Kulkarni explains why: "I want to devote more time to arts because I have always had an inclination towards it. I am a vocalist and have undertaken training in classical music for more than 20 years. That said, my education in architecture has further helped me understand arts and vice-versa. But it's difficult to pursue both together. An architect's job is not cushy. It needs extensive travelling, site visits, working with labourers and so on, which hardly gives me time to pursue my other passion. So, I took a call and decided to wholeheartedly explore the arts."

Kulkarni has worked as an independent architect for more than 25 years and has executed

329 projects which include architecture, landscapes and interiors.

## Workshops here & abroad

Her music appreciation workshops in Pune, Mumbai and the US have received good response. "My project, *Gandhar*, had received a grant of \$7,000 from the Arts Council of New Orleans in 2009. The experience has been immensely gratifying and I am proud to take my culture and tradition beyond my own country," says Kulkarni who will soon be conducting workshops in Boston and San Francisco.

Giving us a peek into *Gandhar*, an in-depth eight-hour crash course on Indian classical mu-

sic, she says, "I have been singing, playing instruments and explaining the beauty of Indian classical music to audiences which include both amateurs and those who have taken training in classical music," she shares.

## Fusion reaches out to bigger audience

"I am a purist, but my work involves blending of various arts," says Kulkarni and continues, "Fusion music opens the door to a wider audience, including non-Indians. I have also learnt to appreciate the US culture. For instance, I love their attention to detail, sense of time, discipline, commitment and respect for each other's skills."