

A DREAM SEQUENCE

By **Karanjeet Kaur**

ON A BRIGHT summer day in 1958, Art Kane embarked upon a preposterous project — getting America's biggest jazz musicians to pose in a single frame. Kane, who had asked everyone to be present in front of a brownstone near the 125th Street station in Harlem, New York, at 10 am, would later say he wasn't sure if anyone would turn up. But most of them did, and the iconic photograph — quite a prized acquisition in the drawing rooms of the discerning today — includes Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Golson, Thelonious Monk, Buck Clayton, Mary Lou Williams and 52 others.

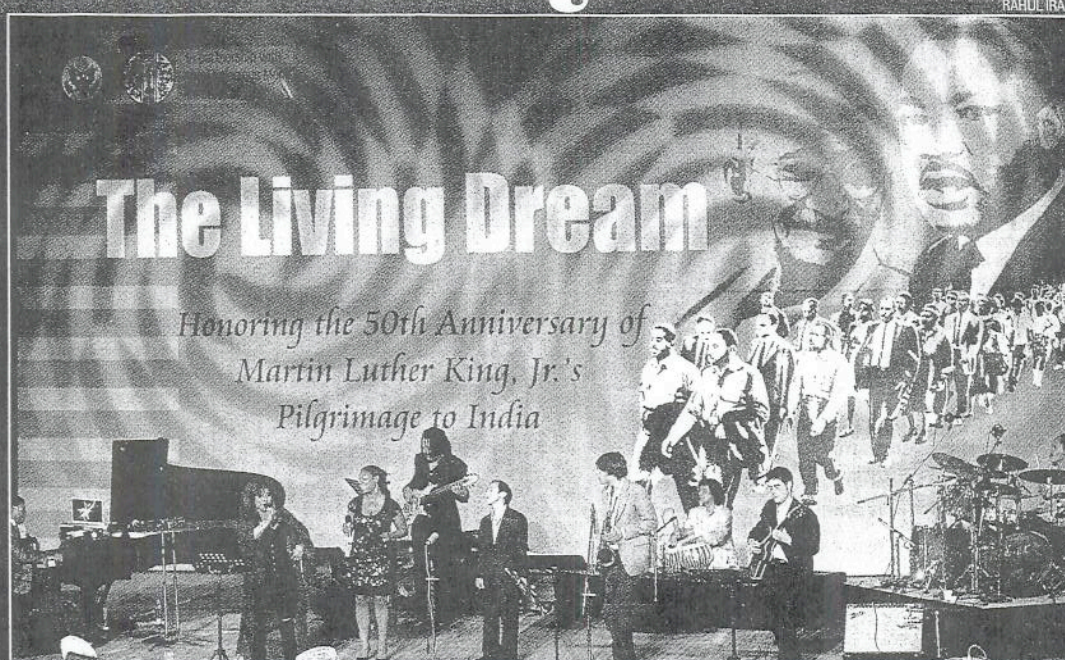
On Monday night at the Siri Fort Auditorium, it was impossible not to draw parallels with the photograph — after all, some of the American jazz movement's biggest names, including the 12-time Grammy winner Herbie Hancock, George Duke and 10-time Grammy winner Chaka Khan, performed at The Living Dream concert. The concert celebrated the golden jubilee of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "pilgrimage" to India in 1959. Other performers at the concert included Dee Dee Bridgewater, Teri Lynne Carrington and students from the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz (helmed by Hancock), as well as Ustad Zakir Hussain, who was performing for the first time in the country, after a successful run at the Grammys this year.

The concert got off to a flying start with a superb rendition of *We Shall Overcome* by Khan and Bridgewater. In the next set, George Duke beatboxed, even as Carrington (on the drums) and Hussain got into a *jugalbandi*. Khan, with her overpowering vocals in the delightfully quirky *A Night in New Delhi*, managed to drown out every instrument on stage — including the drums. Hancock surprised everyone, perhaps including himself, when he played the technically strenuous *Speak Like a Child*. What was not surprising was his sense of humour, evident when he said things like, "We know music has been used for war, but I think we all agree that it's not the best use of it."

Bridgewater took centre stage with the Miles Davis classic, *All Blues*, followed by the eternal favourite *Amazing Grace*, which she sang with each hum pronounced. She sang, in fact, with such vigour that it was surprising to see her not burst an artery on stage. But they saved the best for the last.

The concert ended with a heart-breakingly lovely instrumental version of *Raghu Patti Raghu*. There were few dry eyes left in the hall by the time Mahatma Gandhi's favourite *bhajan* finished. As Dee Dee Bridgewater put it, "This is my first visit to India, and that I had an opportunity to sing on this occasion is extremely close to my heart. I am humbled. I feel I am in a dream." She could well have spoken for the rest of us.

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(Clockwise from above) Chaka Khan performs alongside Herbie Hancock on the piano, Ustad Zakir Hussain on the tabla and Teri Lynne Carrington on the drums; Hancock with George Duke on the keyboard; Carrington lets go during a spirited rendition of the Miles Davis classic, *All Blues*; and Ustad Zakir Hussain

