**Serena concludes Season 3 of Sarangi Music Competition**

Serena Hotels concluded the Sarangi Music Competition, Season 3 this Thursday, 29th 2019. The star-studded ceremony was held at the Sheesh Mahal hall of the hotel where various members of the diplomatic corps, business community and Islamabad society gathered to hear the shortlisted contestants.

Sarangi, which was launched in October 2017 is a part of Serena Hotel’s Cultural Diplomacy Initiative which aims to protect and promote the cultural heritage of Pakistan by encouraging young talents and giving them an opportunity to become the nation’s rising star. Through engaging social media, the music competition, over the years, has received tremendous response from across the country and an incredible pool of talented singers and musicians has been identified, and given opportunities.

The jury panel consisted of renowned figures of music industry, Zoe Viccaji, Asif Ali Santoo and Sarmad Ghafoor. All four of the shortlisted contestants, Humail Rajpoot, Najum Saleem, Samia Gohar and Atif Sunny gave short performances which the judges assessed. Coming from diverse backgrounds, from different parts of the country, their experiences and training were reflected in their styles as they performed in front of more than 500 people.

As a special treat, Asif Ali Santoo also performed a few couplets from Tere Bina Nahi Lagda Dil Mera Dholna, Jaaniya Haaniya while the results were compiled.

Zoe Viccaji and Sarmad Ghafoor made the much-awaited announcement sharing that it was a very close decision. The decision was so close that Humail and Samia were both declared winners of the third season of Sarangi. Humail won the recording of a song and its music video while Samia was awarded a full scholarship for her Bachelor’s degree in Musicology.

Mr Santoo said: “I am blown away by the quality of submission received from all over Pakistan. It was a tough challenge for us judges to shortlist only four people from 160 submissions, but we tried to do justice.”

“With the dearth of a proper music industry and opportunities for younger people, projects like Sarangi gives young musicians a platform to work towards and be heard on a larger platform. The final prize which is a song recording and music video is so apt and something I would have truly valued when I first started pursuing music,” Ms. Viccaji said.

Serena Hotels CEO Aziz Boolani, speaking at the occasion, said: “Serena has promoted the arts and intercultural activities to inspire a culture of peace and hope. And we truly believe in giving recognition and platform to the emerging artists that need recognition. We have used our social media to introduce these competitions and have received tremendous response from all over Pakistan. Tonight, we not only celebrate the winners but also the incredible creative talent that Pakistan possesses”.