



Advance Program Notes

Zakir Hussain and Masters of Percussion
Monday, March 31, 2014, 8 pm

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

ZAKIR HUSSAIN

and

Masters of Percussion

with

Selvaganesh Vinayakram (kanjira and ghatam)

Steve Smith (western drums)

Niladri Kumar (sitar)

Dilshad Khan (sarangi)

Deepak Bhatt (dhol)

Vijay Chavan (dholki)

The preeminent classical tabla virtuoso of our time, Zakir Hussain delivers brilliant performances that have established him as a national treasure in his native India and as one of the world's most esteemed and influential musicians, renowned for his genre-defying collaborations. His playing is marked by uncanny intuition and masterful improvisational dexterity, founded in formidable knowledge and study.

Masters of Percussion, an outgrowth of Hussain's memorable tours with his father, the legendary Ustad Allarakha, has enjoyed successful tours in the West since 1996. Joining the 2014 tour will be Selvaganesh Vinayakram (kanjira and ghatam), Steve Smith (western drums), Niladri Kumar (sitar), Dilshad Khan, (sarangi), Deepak Bhatt (dhol), and Vijay Chavan (dholki).

*Zakir Hussain appears by arrangement with IMG Artists
152 W. 57th Street, 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10019*

For more information, please visit www.zakirhussain.com.

Artist Biographies

Zakir Hussain

Zakir Hussain is appreciated both in the field of percussion and in the music world at large as an international phenomenon. A classical tabla virtuoso of the highest order, his consistently brilliant and exciting performances have not only established him as a national treasure in his own country, India, but gained him worldwide fame. His playing is marked by uncanny intuition and masterful improvisational dexterity, founded in formidable knowledge and study. A favorite accompanist for many of India's greatest classical musicians and dancers, he has not let his genius rest there.

Widely considered a chief architect of the contemporary world music movement, Hussain's contribution to world music has been unique, with many historic collaborations, including *Shakti*, which he founded with John McLaughlin and L. Shankar; *Remember Shakti*; the *Diga Rhythm Band*; *Making Music*; *Planet Drum* with Mickey Hart; *Tabla Beat Science*; *Sangam* with Charles Lloyd and Eric Harland; and recordings and performances with artists as diverse as George Harrison, YoYo Ma, Joe Henderson, Van Morrison, Airto Moreira, Pharoah Sanders, Billy Cobham, Mark Morris, Rennie Harris, and the Kodo drummers. His 2009 recording with frequent collaborators and trio-mates Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer, *The Melody of Rhythm*, was nominated for a Grammy in 2010.



The foremost disciple of his father, the legendary Ustad Allarakha, Hussain was a child prodigy who began his professional career at the age of 12 and toured internationally with great success by the age of 18. He has been the recipient of many awards, grants and honors, including Padma Bhushan (2002), Padma Shri (1988), the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1991), Kalidas Samman (2006), the 1999 National Heritage Fellowship Award, the Bay Area Isadora Duncan Award (1998-99), and Grammy Awards in 1991 and 2009 for Best World Music Album for *Planet Drum* and *Global Drum Project*, both collaborations with Mickey Hart. His music and extraordinary contribution to the music world were honored in April 2009, with four widely-heralded and sold-out concerts for Carnegie Hall's *Perspectives* series. Also in 2009, Hussain was named a member in the Order of Arts and Letters by France's Ministry of Culture and Communication. Most recently, the National Symphony Orchestra, with Christoph Eschenbach, commissioned and premiered Hussain's *Concerto for Four Soloists* at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, which was met with great acclaim.

Selvaganesh Vinyakaram

Selvaganesh Vinyakaram is the world's premiere performer on the kanjira, the South Indian frame drum. The son of Hussain's *Planet Drum* and *Shakti* partner, T. H. "Vikku" Vinayakram, he is also a veteran of *Remember Shakti* with John McLaughlin. His solo album *Soukha* (2006) featured all of the members of *Remember Shakti*, as well as his father and Masters of Percussion sitarist Niladri Kumar. Selvaganesh is also a major force in Tamil film making circles, composing songs in a beguiling mixture of genres, from folk to hip-hop to romantic ballads, and backed by a wide array of players from all over the world.

Artist Biographies, continued

Steve Smith

Steve Smith is the first non-Indian drummer to be included in a Masters of Percussion tour. A Berklee College of Music alumnus, he toured with the jazz violinist Jean-Luc Ponty and the rocker Ronnie Montrose before joining the mega-hit American band Journey for the peak years of its success. American music fans voted him the world's #1 All-Around Drummer for Modern Drummer magazine for five years running. In recent years he has been among the most in-demand session players around, working with musicians from pop (Mariah Carey, Andrea Bocelli, and Bryan Adams) to jazz (Ahmad Jamal, Mike Stern, and Kai Eckhardt). He also tours with his jazz/world music group Steve Smith & Vital Information, currently celebrating their 30th anniversary. Smith joined Hussain during the latter's 2013 residency at the inauguration of the San Francisco Jazz Center. For more information, see www.vitalinformation.com.

Niladri Kumar

Niladri Kumar is on the cutting edge of the sitar, playing at the highest level in both classical and fusion realms. He began playing at age four and first performed in public at the age of six, winning the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar award in 2007. He recorded with John McLaughlin on the album *Floating Point*, and went on to create the "zitar," an electrified fusion of sitar and guitar. At the same time, his profound abilities as a classical sitarist led to his winning the Kumbha M.N. Mathur Award in the 51st Maharana Kumbha Sangeet Samorah in 2013. This is his second Masters of Percussion tour.

Dilshad Khan

Dilshad Khan took up the sarangi at the age of six under the tutelage of his grandfather, Ustad Gulab Khansahib, one of the greatest sarangi players of his era, and his father, Ustad Nasir Khansahib, also a great sitar player. He later studied extensively with his uncle, Padma Bhushan Sultan Khansahib. Khan is part of the ninth generation of performers in the Sikar Gharana of Rajasthan, India. In addition to performing with a wide array of fellow musicians, Khan is a famous name in the Bollywood film industry, where he has played on more than 500 movies, including the hits *Devdas*, *Namaste London*, and *Tere Naam*.

Deepak Bhatt

Deepak Bhatt is a superb young player of the dhol, a double-headed drum. A student of Taufiq Quereshi in the classical and Carnatic genres, he plays in a number of different ensembles, featuring music from classical to fusion to Bollywood. He has performed with Taufiq Quereshi, Trilok Gurtu, Niladri Kumar, and Selvaganesh, among others, and was part of Hussain's 2009 Grammy-winning CD, *Global Drum Project*.

Vijay Chavan

Vijay Chavan was born to a family with a strong tradition of Indian folk drumming and singing, and is one of the leading exponents of the dholki, the premiere folk instrument of Maharashtra. He is a well known performer in the Hindi film industry, working with Laxmikant Pyarelal, Anand Millind, Uttam Singh, and Pritam, as well as the great Tamil film music composer, Ilayaraja. Vijay has performed with Trilok Gurtu, George Brooks, Giovanni Hidalgo, and Terry Bozzio (Frank Zappa).