

# WIGMORE HALL

Saturday 27 July 2024  
11.30 am

## Sarod Quintet: Three Generations

Amjad Ali Khan sarod  
Amaan Ali Bangash sarod  
Ayaan Ali Bangash sarod  
Zohaar Ali Bangash sarod  
Abeer Ali Bangash sarod  
Anubrata Chatterjee tabla

Overture of peace: Raga Ahir Bhairav

Raga Anand Bhairav

Celebrating Gandhi: Vande Mataram

Amjad Ali Khan (b.1945)

Our Love

Lydian Rivers



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It is an incomparable journey where the Guru leads you from the visible to the invisible, from the material to the divine, from the ephemeral to the eternal. A wonderful and strange mystery of Indian classical music is the fact that one can spend a lifetime trying to obtain knowledge and perfection and still feel that one has only touched a mere drop of an ocean. The learning never stops along the journey of searching and discovering. Indian Classical music has had both a very spiritual and scientific development and growth, and is a phenomenon that has existed since Vedic times. The tradition of classical music dates back to the Samaveda period. The earliest version of classical music was the Vedic chants. Interestingly, the effect of all the 12 notes on our body, mind and soul is something empirical. Various permutations and combinations give the scales a shape of a raga. However, a raga is much more than this. It's not just a mere scale. A raga has to be invoked, understood and cared for, like a living entity. © 2024 Amjad Ali Khan  
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Today's concert is divided into three segments. The concert starts with a solo presentation by maestro Amjad Ali Khan. This will be followed by a sarod duet by Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash. They present a traditional raga of Indian Classical music set to various rhythmic time cycles. Keeping India's ethos of traditions and legacies alive, the Three Generation Quintet represents the sixth, seventh and eighth generation of musicians coming together on stage and performing together. This will form the third segment, featuring sarod grand master Amjad Ali Khan and his virtuoso sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash on sarods. They will be joined by Ayaan's 11 year old twins Zohaani Ali Bangash and Abeer Ali Bangash. Anubrata Chatterjee plays the Tabla (Indian two-piece drums) and provides accompaniment. An interesting aspect of Indian Classical music is that here you have seven people on stage who don't know what the other is going to do and yet have to perform like a rehearsed orchestra! Therefore, each person's role as performer is really that of three people – the performer, the composer and the conductor. Three in one! Along with the sarods and the tablas, there will be a drone box tuned to the true tonic. Maestro Khan says, 'Since my childhood, I always wanted my instrument, the sarod, to be able to express the entire range of human emotions...to sing, shout, whisper and cry. All the emotions! It has been a long journey so far and by the benevolence of the heavens, the sarod has become far more expressive than before'.

#### **Overture of peace: Raga Ahir Bhairav**

In Western classical terms, *Ahir Bhairav's* scale form equates to the Mixolydian b2 scale (1-b2-3-4-5-6-b7-8) – which, while rare in its own right, holds distinctive sway in jazz-linked styles.

#### **Raga Anand Bhairav**

*Anand Bhairav* uses all the notes of the major scale, but with a flat second. The composition is set to the structure of the time cycle in 15 beats. The fast composition is in 16 beats, composed such that each sequence carries the last beat as an off-beat.

#### **Celebrating Gandhi: Vande Mataram**

*Vande Mataram* is a poem written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in the 1870s. This piece celebrates Mahatma Gandhi, a global icon of goodness, truth, love, non-violence and peace.

Gandhi insisted that 'Each of us must be the change we wish to see in this world'. Therefore let us all work together to recreate, and be deeply motivated by, his enthralling symphony of these values.

#### **Our Love**

During the lockdown in 2020, Maestro Khan's grandchildren surprised him by recording and releasing their first single called *Our Love*. This piece is a playful romantic narrative. There is no sense of separation. Only bright, happy and love-filled sparkling emotions.

#### **Lydian Rivers**

We have many ragas in Indian Classical music that are spins on the Lydian scale in terms of movement and structure. We present the scale in itself with some beautiful compositions. We also celebrate the musical tributaries of this scale with numerous compositions from different ascending and descending structures with the same notes, mostly septatonic (the standard 7 notes of the Lydian scale) but also pentatonic (5 notes selected from the scale) hexatonic (6 notes) and even octatonic - the 7 notes of the Lydian scale plus an extra perfect 'fourth'.

#### **About the Sarod**

Although we automatically assume Indian music and its instruments to be ancient, the Sarod is one example of an instrument that evolved from other structurally similar Indian and Afghan lutes around the middle of the 19th Century. The Sarod as we know it today traces its genealogy and origin back to the rabab of yore. All music evolves because of certain factors which make it sociological reality rather than simply an aesthetic function. So it was with the rabab, the folk instrument of ancient Afghanistan, Persia and several other countries, each with a variation giving it an identity of its own. The Pathan Bangash family of Central Asia pioneered the task and contributed to the evolution of the present day Sarod. It was the quest of Ghulam Bandegi Khan Bangash for something more that resulted in the modification of the rabab with certain additions – the new element of melody being the most significant change (largely made possible with a metal chest on the finger board along with metal strings instead of gut). And it was this concept of melody which gave the instrument its name 'sarod', being literally a derivation from *sarod* meaning 'melody' in Persian. These innovations won Ghulam Bandegi Bangash great acclaim and were further perfected by his son Ghulam Ali Khan Bangash. These were all our forefathers! Having said all this, you eventually are what your music is. Your legacy should show in your work, not on facts and history alone! © 2024 Amjad Ali Khan  
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#### **About the Tabla**

The Tabla consists of two single-headed, barrel-shaped small drums of slightly different sizes and shapes: *baya* and *daya* for left and right drums, respectively. Tabla is a traditional percussion instrument of North Indian heritage, and is a significant and important part of North Indian classical music. It is an instrument that can be played individually in solo performance and can also accompany different genres of music.

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