

WIGMORE HALL

Saturday 27 July 2024
7.30pm

Amjad Ali Khan sarod
David Murphy conductor
Britten Sinfonia

Jacqueline Shave violin I
Miranda Dale violin II
Clare Finnimore viola
Lionel Handy cello
Stephen Williams double bass
Rees Webster oboe
Emma Fielding cor anglais
Martin Owen horn
Chloe Harrison horn

Anubrata Chatterjee tabla

Amjad Ali Khan (b.1945)

15th Century Raga (Raga Darbari)

Interval

Jacqueline Shave (b. 1960)

Machair to Myrrh (2010)

Amjad Ali Khan

Shringar: The Adornment (2024) *world première*
arranged by David Murphy for sarod and chamber
ensemble



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I cannot remember a particular day on which I was initiated into the world of music. It was a part of me from as early as I can remember. Indeed, I cannot think of a moment when music has been separated from my life. Life itself was Music and Music was Life. Music is a celebration of life. A wonderful and strange mystery of Indian Classical music is the fact that one can spend a lifetime trying to attain knowledge and perfection and still feel that one has only touched a mere drop in an ocean. In every culture, music has its roots in spirituality. Music has always been an internal part of worship of God. Musical vibrations can convey moods and emotions and have the ability to mould and shape our consciousness. Different types of music can have different effects on the mind – both positive and negative. Our mind is like any living organism. It must be nurtured and needs stimulation to develop and grow. Music is one of the most important 'foods' for the intellect. Each musical note is connected to this most important part of our minds. Music also has many faces. Conversation, recitation, chanting and singing are all part of music. I am so honoured to return to Wigmore Hall with the prolific Britten Sinfonia which has been pushing the boundaries of what a chamber orchestra can do, and has earned an international reputation as one of the best ensembles playing today.

David Murphy holds an unparalleled position in today's international music scene. I have had a very special association with him for the last two decades. He has been an integral part of most of my projects. Crossing and combining genres effortlessly, David's experience and scholarly knowledge of repertoire together with his unconventional musical journey add an innovative and creative spark to his music making. I am honoured to première *Shringar: The Adornment* with David Murphy's pioneering musicianship and approach to the Western Classical tradition that bristles with excitement, imagination and creativity along with the magical members of Britten Sinfonia.-
Amjad Ali Khan

Amjad Ali Khan, Sarod

15th-century ragas

Darbari Kanada

Darbari is a grave raga, considered to be one of the more difficult to master, and with the potential for profound emotional impact. It is said to have been composed by Miyan Tansen, the famous 16th-century composer in emperor Akbar's court. This tradition is reflected in the name itself: *darbar* is the Persian-derived word in Hindi meaning 'court'. It has been a special raga to me as my father, the monumental sarod icon Haafiz Ali Khan, learnt it from Wazir Khan,

who broke the convention of teaching only family members and accepted my father as his disciple. Wazir Khan was a direct disciple of the Tansen school. I present some compositions in different tempos in these ragas composed by me in the 1970s! Some have been new to sarod playing techniques. Musicians and listeners of music have been communicating with each other across all barriers through this 'language of music' since time immemorial. As we use flowers in worship, welcoming, honouring, departure and celebration no matter what our race, origin, religion or language, we similarly arrange musical notes into 'bouquets' or compositions which display all our human feelings and emotions.

Jacqueline Shave has written: 'I wrote *Machair* to Myrrh on the Isle of Harris in 2010. It was originally written for violin, guitar and tabla but this arrangement is for string trio, tabla and sarod. The piece describes standing amongst the wild dunes on the South Coast of Harris in the *Machair* looking out over the Atlantic and imagining being carried by the wind, South to Essaouira on the West Coast of Morocco'.

Shringar: The Adornment (world première)

The discourse between instruments is a kind of meditative exploration on the nature of sonoral divinity. The idea was to bring the spirit of sharing the great unique treasures of our own artistic traditions, as well as finding common ground in ragas and medieval modes, in order to achieve a cross-fertilization at both the cellular and cosmic levels of two classical music traditions often held to be radically different. In an amazing way, it interweaves our varied musical, spiritual and artistic traditions with mystical beauty, creativity, grace and great emotion. Indian music finds resonances and parallels in other music, so that the Western musicians concerned can find a way into Indian music without the years of formal training expected from that Indian genre.

Yet if we focus only on the music, this is a meeting of living musicians across cultures and it is as feeling human beings that we can understand and appreciate each other and thereby heal this divided world, and what better way is there to achieve this ideal than through the joy and spiritual nourishment that music brings. That for me is *The Adornment*: decorating yourself with something colourful and interesting, here symbolically represented by ragas *Gauri*, *Suhag Bhairav*, *Zila Kafi*, *Bahar* and *Mishra Kirwani*.

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