



ZAKIR HUSSAIN

TRIVENI

TABLA Zakir Hussain

VEENA Jayanthi Kumaresh

VIOLIN Kala Ramnath

THURSDAY, **APRIL 7** @ 7:30 PM

Annenberg Center, Zellerbach Theatre

There will be no intermission.

PROGRAM NOTES

Zakir Hussain, Kala Ramnath and Jayanthi Kumaresh have come together for the first time as a trio for the 2022 Triveni tour. Leading Indian classical exponents of their respective instruments—tabla, violin and Saraswati veena—each is also renowned as virtuoso collaborator, pathbreaker and educator, advancing the art of their particular instruments to remarkable levels in the context of their classical traditions and beyond. Feted and honored in India and abroad with numerous awards, each has successfully toured all over the world with their own acclaimed solo projects.

Triveni is the mythical site of the union of three sacred rivers in India, and the name aptly represents the confluence of the varied musicalities which the three maestros bring to this collaboration. A hallmark of Zakir Hussain's iconic career has been his groundbreaking work at the forefront of brilliant musical dialogues between Hindustani (North Indian) and Carnatic (South Indian) music. With Kala Ramnath, an innovative representative of North Indian raga tradition, Jayanthi Kumaresh, the leading exponent of the ancient South Indian veena, and Zakir Hussain seamlessly stitching North and South Indian rhythm traditions to provide a bridge for veena and violin to meet, Triveni promises to be a fluent, joyous and entirely original musical conversation, a sonic experience of the highest order.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Zakir Hussain (Tabla)

The preeminent classical tabla virtuoso of our time, Zakir Hussain is appreciated both in the field of percussion and in the music world at large as an international phenomenon and one of the world's most esteemed and influential musicians. 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, accompanying India's greatest classical musicians and dancers and touring internationally with great success by the age of 18. His brilliant accompaniment, solo performance and genre-defying collaborations, including his pioneering work to develop a dialogue between North and South Indian musicians, have elevated the status of his instrument both in India and globally. He has continued the work begun a generation earlier by his father and thereby brought the tabla into a new dimension of renown and appreciation.

Widely considered a chief architect of the contemporary world music movement, Hussain's contribution has been unique, with many historic and groundbreaking collaborations including Shakti, Remember Shakti, Masters of Percussion, Planet Drum and Global Drum Project with Mickey Hart, Tabla Beat Science, Sangam with Charles Lloyd and Eric Harland, Crosscurrents Trio with Dave Holland and Chris Potter, in trio with Béla Fleck and Edgar Meyer and in quartet with Herbie Hancock.

As a composer, he has scored music for numerous feature films, major events and productions. He has composed three concertos and his third, the first ever concerto for tabla and orchestra, premiered in India in 2015 by the Symphony Orchestra of India, in Europe and the U.K. in 2016, and in the USA in 2017 by the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center. A Grammy® Award winner, Hussain is the recipient of countless awards and honors, including Padma Bhushan, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, the USA's National Heritage Fellowship and Officier in France's Order of Arts and Letters. Voted Best Percussionist by both the *DownBeat* Critics' Poll and *Modern Drummer's* Reader's Poll over several years including 2020, Hussain was honored in 2018 by the Montréal Jazz Festival with their Antônio Carlos Jobim Award. In 2019, Hussain was named a Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellow and received two honorary doctorates, one from Berklee College of Music and the other from Indira Kala Sangit University in Khairagarh, India.

As an educator, Hussain conducts many workshops and lectures each year, has been in residence at Princeton University and Stanford University and, in 2015, was appointed Regents' Lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley. His yearly workshop in the San Francisco Bay area, conducted for the past 30 years, has become a widely anticipated event for performers and serious students of tabla. He is the founder and president of Moment Records, an independent record label presenting rare live recordings of Indian classical music and world music. Hussain was resident artistic director at SFJAZZ from 2013-2016 and was honored with its Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his "unparalleled contribution to the world of music."

Jayanthi Kumaresh (Veena)

With her mesmerizing glides, the timing and purity of her notes and her soulful playing, Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh has been captivating audiences around the world for 30 years and is one of the leading veena artists today. A sixth-generation musician, she began playing the veena at age three and is one of the youngest veena artistes to receive the A-TOP grading, the highest from All India Radio.

Apart from several prestigious venues and festivals in India, Kumaresh has performed at several international festivals such as San Francisco Jazz Festival, Darbar Festival, Queensland Music Festival, Darwin Music Festival and Adelaide Music Festival as well as at prestigious venues such as U.N., New York; Palladium, Indiana; Theatre de la Ville, Paris; and the Northwest Folklife Festival, Seattle.

She has received many awards in India including Sangeetha Choodamani, Kalaimamani by the Government of Tamil Nadu, Veena Naada Mani, Kala Ratna, Sathyashree, Gaana Varidhi and is a seven-time recipient of The Music Academy, Chennai's Award for Veena, to name a few.

A collaborator, she has performed with legends such as tabla Ustad Zakir Hussain, violin maestro Shri. R. Kuamaresh and flautist Ronu Majumdar. A pioneer, she founded the Indian National Orchestra, where 21 musicians playing different Indian instruments come together under one banner to showcase Indian classical music. A researcher, she holds a doctorate for her work on styles and playing techniques of the Saraswati veena and conducts workshops and lecture demonstrations around the world.

A composer, she has scored music for several dance productions and musicals. Her music for the dance ballet *Krishna Bhakthi* for Rasika, Portland featured both the Carnatic and Hindustani styles of compositions. She composed and released the album *Mysterious Duality* which is a multi-dimensional reflection of the simple yet complex self through a single instrument, the veena. Kumaresh has overlaid layers of several veena recordings to create a symphonic composition. She has also recorded for world-renowned labels such as Times Music, Music Today, Sa re ga ma, Sense World and Home Records.

The niece of violin legend Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman, Kumaresh attributes what she is today to her maternal aunt and guru, Smt. Padmavathy Ananthagopalan, whose training helped her evolve as an artist. Her mother, Smt. Lalgudi Rajalakshmi, first introduced her to music, and she is also fortunate to have trained later under veena virtuoso Dr. S. Balachander.

Blending the traditional and the innovative in her music in terms of content, technique, virtuosity and expression, Kumaresh seeks to express the true voice of the veena, which transcends the boundaries of language and region.

Kala Ramnath (Violin)

Maestro Kala Ramnath with her "Singing Violin" stands among the world's finest, most inspirational instrumentalists. Her playing has been featured on the Grammy® Award-nominated *Miles from India* project, her compositions have appeared on the Grammy® Award-winning album *In 27 Pieces* and the Kronos Quartet's *50 For The Future*. The UK-based *Songlines Magazine* hailed Ramnath as one of the 50 world's best instrumentalists and selected the album *Kala* as one of its 50 best recordings. She was the

first Indian violinist ever to be featured in the violin bible, *The Strad*. She was the subject of a solo essay in the third edition of the encyclopedia, *Rough Guide: World Music*. Her contributions feature in Hollywood soundtracks like the Oscar-nominated *Blood Diamond* and many more. And, most significantly in an Indian context, in 2017 she was awarded the most illustrious Sangeet Natak Academy Puraskar for her contributions to the violin in Hindustani classical music.

Born into a dynasty of prodigious musical talent, one which has given Indian music such violin legends as her paternal uncle Prof. T.N. Krishnan and paternal aunt Dr. N. Rajam, Ramnath's violinistic vision began manifesting early. Recognizing her innate talent, her astute grandfather, Vidwan A. Narayan Iyer, took her under his tutelage. Thus began her most auspicious journey on the road to astounding renown and international acclaim.

She became a pre-eminent disciple of the legendary vocalist Pandit Jasraj. During this mentorship, Ramnath began revolutionizing approaches to vocalized Hindustani violin technique. During this time, she began formulating a voice quite unlike other Indian and non-Indian violinists. Justifiably her voice came to be dubbed "Singing Violin!"

Acknowledged as a virtuoso of staggering proportions, Ramnath has performed at the most prestigious music festivals in India. She has appeared on world stages including the Sydney Opera House, Paris' Théâtre de la Ville, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts, Singapore's Esplanade, New York's Carnegie Hall, the Rudolstadt Festival in Germany and the Edinburgh Music Festival in Scotland.

Ramnath is at the vanguard of the present generation of Indian instrumental superstars. Due to her rigorous training in the Hindustani classical tradition and familiarity with the Karnatic classical tradition, she comfortably forges musical alliances with artists of renown from different genres around the globe incorporating elements of western classical, jazz, flamenco and traditional African music into her rich and varied repertoire.

Ramnath is a sought-after artist to work and experiment with who has collaborated with orchestras such as the London Symphony and London Philharmonic and world music legends like George Brooks, Kai Eckhart, Béla Fleck, Terry Bozzio, Giovanni Hidalgo, Ustad Zakir Hussain, Abbos Kossimov, Ray Manzarek of the Doors, Edgar Meyer and Airto Moreira. Raga Afrika, Global Conversation and Yashila are bands Ramnath has founded with her fellow world music artists.

Along with being a stellar performer, Ramnath is also a sought-after teacher. Beside her busy performing and composing schedules, she continues to teach, lecture and conduct workshops all around the world, including Rotterdam Conservatory of Music in Netherlands, University of Giessen in Germany and the Weill Institute in association with the Carnegie Hall in New York. In changing times, music still needs to be passed on and taught. It still needs to be communicated.

Ramnath has been bestowed the 'A-TOP' grade by India's Radio and Television and is one of the youngest artists to have achieved this honor. She is the recipient of many awards including the Rashtriya Kumar Gandharva Sanman, Pandit Jasraj Gaurav Puraskar and the Sur Ratna as well as, recently and most notably of all, the Sangeet Natak Academy Puraskar.

An established name in the world music scene, Ramnath today is keen to enrich the lives of under-privileged and sick children through music in the form of her foundation, Kalashree.