

**ZAKIR HUSSAIN**

Zakir Hussain is considered one of the greatest musicians of our time. Along with his legendary father and teacher, Ustad Allarakha, he has elevated the status of his instrument, the tabla, both in India and around the world. A favorite accompanist for India's leading classical musicians and dancers, Zakir is also widely recognized as a chief architect of the world music movement with his many historic collaborations, including Shakti, Remember Shakti, Diga, Planet Drum and his ever-changing musical feast, Masters of Percussion. In Summer 2012, Zakir was named Best Percussionist in the Downbeat Critics' Poll.

A child prodigy, Zakir began touring at the age of twelve, becoming the most acclaimed Indian musician of his generation and one of the world's leading percussionists. He is the recipient of many honors, including a recent Grammy in the Best Contemporary World Music category for Global Drum Project with Mickey Hart, Giovanni Hidalgo and Sikiru Adepoju, Padma Bhushan from the government of India in 2002, and the 1999 National Heritage Fellowship, the United States' most prestigious honor for a master in traditional arts. In 1992, Planet Drum, an album co-created and co-produced by Zakir, became the first recording to win a Grammy in the Best World Music category and also won the Downbeat Critics' Poll for Best World Beat Album. Both Modern Drummer and Drum! magazines named him Best World Music Drummer and Best World Beat Percussionist, respectively, in 2007. In April, 2009, his music was showcased for four sold-out nights at Carnegie Hall's Artist Perspective Series. Also in 2009, Zakir was named an Officer in the Order of Arts and Letters by France's Ministry of Culture and Communication.

In March 2011 the National Symphony Orchestra commissioned and presented his Concerto for Four Soloists at the Kennedy Center conducted by Christophe Eschenbach. He has contributed to innumerable recordings and has received widespread recognition as a composer for his many projects, scores and soundtracks including Little Buddha, In Custody, Vanaprastham, Mystic Masseur, Mr & Mrs. Iyer, YoYo Ma's Silk Road Project and the acclaimed Concerto for Banjo, Bass and Tabla commissioned by the Nashville Symphony for their center's opening gala in 2006 and co-composed with his constant colleagues, Edgar Meyer and Bela Fleck. In March, 2013, SF Jazz in San Francisco presented four nights featuring Zakir Hussain in different musical collaborations for their much-anticipated new center's inaugural season. In Summer 2013 Zakir embarked on an extensive tour of South America with legendary Jazz pianist Herbie Hancock. Zakir will be bringing his Masters of Percussion back to the US in Spring 2014, including a performance at the world-famous Madison Square Garden.

**RAHUL SHARMA**

Rahul Sharma is the son and musical disciple of santoor player Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, from a family steeped in the tradition of Kashmir. He is an Indian classical musician, working in the Hindustani classical music tradition. He plays the santoor, a type of hammered dulcimer whose strings are struck with a pair of light carved wooden mallets. Normally a santoor concert features just one raga, since to play a different raga dozens of strings have to be retuned.

He was born in 1972 in Mumbai. The mountainous region of Kashmir was where Rahul's musical lineage evolved. His grandfather, Uma Dutt Sharma, was a master of the santoor. The harsh tone of the instrument made it fall out of line with folk music as well as classical music, but Uma Dutt Sharma persisted.

Shivkumar Sharma mastered the instrument by experimenting with various striking positions and tones. As Shivkumar's status rose in the musical circles of Kashmir, word of his performances grew over borders and continents. Rahul Sharma continued the tradition of the instrument. He was always in love with music,

singing and playing the harmonium at an early age. Learning the santoor at age 13, he wasn't completely sure of pursuing music till he turned 17. After studying economics at Mumbai's Mithibai College, Rahul Sharma began performing with his father. He started accompanying him in concerts in 1996, at the age of 24.

In September 2000, Real World Records released *Music Of The Himalayas*, a live performance in Turin featuring Sharma, percussionist Pandit Bhawani Shankar, and tabla player Ustad Shafat Ahmed Khan. Rahul has performed in North America and throughout Europe, and at various folk and world music festivals, including WOMAD.

He quickly became a sought after concert artist, and has released several CDs, some solo and some with his father. He has collaborated with international musicians like pianist Richard Clayderman and keyboardist Kersi Lord. *The Confluence* (2002) has mostly Indian titles, six of which were composed by Rahul Sharma himself. He provided the music for the Hindi feature film *Mujhse Dosti Karoge*, for which he received the award in the 'Best Debut-Music Director' category at the 2002 Zee Bollywood Music Awards. His last album *Time Traveler* which has been described as New-Age was released on March 10, 2006.