



(LYRCD 7415)

## **FLIGHTS OF IMPROVISATION**

G.S. Sachdev - Bansuri  
Zakir Hussain - Tabla

### **THE ARTISTS**

G.S. SACHDEV is unquestionably one of the foremost figures of Indian Classical music today. It has been through his efforts that the bansuri has become a respected instrument in the west. Sachdev is a musician who blends talent with imagination, intellect with emotion, and technique with temperament. He has the ability to touch the spirit of the raga and move the listener emotionally with his pure classical approach. Above all, he knows how to let the music flow naturally and peacefully with great depth of feeling.

ZAKIR HUSSAIN is a virtuoso in the classical idiom and his spirited musical personality and enormous rhythmic vitality have brought worldwide respect to the art of tabla playing.

### **THE MUSIC**

The raga is an overwhelming demonstration of the power of melody. For sheer beauty of sound, this music is unsurpassed. The individual notes are embellished in a certain manner that helps to establish the mood, which can be devotional, serene, romantic, or joyful. The mood is maintained throughout the piece irrespective of the length of performance. In the tradition of Northern India, each raga is performed at a particular time of day.

Improvisation plays an essential role, as there is no tradition of written notation. The important point is learning to listen to the subtle differences in tone qualities and rhythmic variation, and the endless possibilities in the combination of even a few notes. Each new time there are surprises and therein lies the magic.

In the Punjab region the language is very musical and there is a tradition of composing rhyming couplets in everyday speech. With this rich heritage of creative language it was nature for Sachdev to understand the art of improvisation in music as well.

## TRACKS

### AHIR BHAIROV - 24:55

Ahir Bhairov is traditionally performed in the morning. The gradual leisurely unfolding of this raga, innovative phrases, and weaving of intricate musical patterns all combine to form an imagery, which reflects Sachdev's acute sense of aesthetics. All seven notes in ascent and descent are used with re (2nd) and ni (7th) flat. The mood is devotional. Freshness of the morning prevails throughout the piece. After the opening alap (invocation) a medium slow composition in ek tala of 12 beats is followed by a short composition in fast teen tala of 16 beats. Zakir's imaginative and sensitive accompaniment adds to the sublime mood of this raga.

### SHUDHA SARANG - 6:11

Shudha Sarang is one of India's most popular midday melodies. It omits the ga (3rd) note from the scale and makes use of the dha (6th) note in the descent while the ma (4th) note is permitted in its flat and sharp variations. It is played in fast teen tala with an exuberant mood.

### ABHOGI - 28:59

The emotional richness and depth of Sachdev's playing and the dignified style of rendering this serene raga evoke a sense of eternity. The meditative spirit is enhanced in the opening alap with the bass flute followed by the main flute. He adheres to the pure classical form while creating a devotional and prayerful atmosphere with his innovative improvisations. The rhythmic cycles of slow ek tala and fast teen tala exhibit the rapport between flute and tabla, which is absolute. The scale drops the pa (5th) and ni (7th) both in ascent and descent. Ga (3rd) is flat in this peaceful nighttime raga.

## INSTRUMENTS

**BANSURI:** (bans = bamboo, swar = musical note) is a flute of bamboo with seven open finger holes. There are no keys to produce sharps and flats, but all the half and quarter tones are produced by breath control and carefully opening a small portion of the hole with the finger.

**TABLA:** Tabla is a two-piece drum set. The shell of the treble drum is made of wood, and the larger bas drum is made of metal, both with goatskin heads. The tabla can produce a wide variety of sounds.

This music is dedicated to the memory of my mother who inspired and encouraged my passion for music since I was 14 years of age.  
- G.S. Sachdev

#### CREDITS

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