



Department of Music  
University of Alberta

# WORLD MUSIC

## WORLD-MUSIC CONCERT

Flute Music of India

Saturday, March 9, 1991 at 7:30 pm  
Convocation Hall, Arts Building  
University of Alberta

# World-Music is your music!

*"The "cultural pot-pourri" which is Canada....."*

*"Canada is a rich collage of cultural diversity....."*

*"Life in Alberta is enriched by its diverse cultural heritage....."*

*"Cultural diversity is maintained through the desire to assimilate various ethnic groups while maintaining their individuality and preserving their heritage....."*

Canadians hear such statements daily. It is, in fact, a principle by which Canadians define themselves. Now this desire is given expression in the fourth of a series of annual **World-Music** concerts. Indian musicians, GS Sachdev and Swapan Chaudhri have been invited to participate in an evening of ethnic music presented under the auspices of the Department of Music and the Edmonton RagaMala Music Society. The **World-Music** concerts honour **Moses Asch** and the **Asch** family on the occasion of their donation of the complete catalogue of **Folkways** recordings henceforth known as the **Moses and Frances Asch Collection**. **Moses Asch** was the founder of **Folkways Records**, the world's largest commercially available collection of folk and tribal music.

Created in 1988, the **World-Music** concert series reflects the commitment of the Department of Music to conduct research in ethnic music and provides a university-based forum for the presentation of ethnic music to Edmonton audiences.

## The Performers

### GS Sachdev, flute

His supporters range from George Harrison ("a beautiful album") to Paul Horn ("most sensitive playing I've ever heard") to Ravi Shankar ("he moves listeners with his pure and classical approach").

Sachdev is from Chandigarh, Northern India and has studied with masters such as Vijaya Raghav Rao and Pandit Ravi Shankar. He has been a performer and major spokesman of Indian music since moving to California fifteen years ago. GS Sachdev is a master of Indian bamboo flute. He conducts master classes and lecture demonstrations in the Bay area, runs a music school in Berkeley and has his own program on radio KPFA-FM.

GS Sachdev also has eleven recordings to date. He finds classical music a very satisfying form of self-expression. Unlike many of his compatriots, Sachdev hasn't been part of the "fusion" process, mixing classical Indian Music with contemporary and/or Western idioms. "I haven't mixed my style with Western music," he says, "the fusion might make more people come, but the music would suffer."

## **Swapan Chaudhri, tabla**

Swapan Chaudhri, who has already made his mark as one of the most brilliant young tabla players of India, has a healthy combination of vocabulary, brain work and riaz (practice).

Mr Chaudhri, well known throughout India, made his American debut with Maestro Ali Akbar Khan in 1981. San Francisco Chronicle's Henwell Tircuit raved about his "elegant modesty" and his "outstanding musicianship", and went on to say, "the controlled virtuosity of Mr Chaudhri's playing always implied that, if he cared to, nothing could stop him. Golly. What a display he put on!"

A highly sought-after soloist and accompanist, Swapan Chaudhri holds a Master's degree in music, but bases his style on the long training he received from his Guru, Pandit Santosh Krishna Biswas of Calcutta, the eminent exponent of Lucknow Gharana. Presently Swapan Chaudhri is the resident Tabla Master at the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael, California.

## **The Program**

Sachdev performs the classical music of India, a culture with a two thousand year musical tradition. Western listeners accustomed to harmony initially may be deceived by the apparent simplicity of this melodic music. The complexities lie in the subtle variations on the theme, ornamentation of notes, modal colouring, and in the interplay between flute and drums. Since each note stands alone, special care is given to the purity of intonation. The relationship of each note to the ground note or the most important tone in the raga is responsible for the dynamic quality of that note. There is a particular kind of unfulfillment peculiar to each tone, a striving for resolution. Only the ground note is at rest and needs no completion. The music is fresh and vital because, like life and love, it is improvised.

The basis of North Indian music is raga, the melodic form, and tala, the time measure. Thousand of ragas exist, each based on one of ten parent scales. Various ragas are associated with morning, afternoon and evening, as well as with different seasons. Beyond the melodic form, each raga encompasses a particular mood and synthesis of emotion which a skillful musician evokes. Improvisation plays an essential part, but always within the established framework of the raga which is being expressed.

Indian music has a highly developed rhythmic system, known as tala. Tala denotes an organized rhythmic cycle, composed of various rhythmic units, ranging from three to one hundred eight beats.

All Indian classical music is rooted in the vocal tradition, and the flute is regarded as being especially close to the voice, capable of the many subtle nuances of the vocal style.

**Tonight's program will consist of a selection of ragas which will be introduced by the performers during the course of the evening.**

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