Duets From India

Vilayat Khan SITAR and Bismillah Khan SHEHNAI

with tabla accompaniment by Shanta Prasad
DUETS FROM INDIA

VILAYAT KHAN - sitar & BISMILLAH KHAN - shehnai

with tabla accompaniment by Shanta Prasad

The Artists

USTAD VILAYAT KHAN was born into a family of outstanding musicians and inherited the art of Sitar playing from his famous father, the late Ustad Inayat Khan. By a combination of inborn talent and musical training, Vilayat Khan has created a strongly individual style. Recognized internationally as one of the greatest living exponents of the Sitar, he has enthralled audiences in India and the rest of the world by the inspirational beauty of his performances.

BISMILLAH KHAN is unrivalled as a player of the popular Indian instrument, the Shehnai. Born in the State of Bihar, he was introduced to the art of Shehnai playing by his uncle at a very young age. Later, after having attained technical proficiency and audience popularity, he moved to the famous shrine of Lord Vishwanath at Banaras, the holiest of holy cities. In recognition of Bismillah Khan's outstanding contribution to the world of Indian music, and as a tribute to his fame as a master of the Shehnai, the President of India recently conferred the title of Padma Shri on him.

The Instruments

The SITAR can be likened, in a remote way, to the family of Western stringed instruments to which the guitar belongs, inasmuch as the player produces various notes by moving his left hand over the frets on the neck while plucking the strings with his right. In particular, the Sitar is distinguished by a disproportionately long neck across which are strung metallic frets whose position can be changed to suit the melody pattern of any particular Raga. Besides the main strings passing over these frets, there are a number of subsidiary strings fixed beneath the frets which are rarely plucked, but which enhance the musical tone of the instrument by resonating sympathetically. The sound box consists of a large gourd over which rests the bridge.

The SHEHNAI is oboe-like in tone and appearance, but without keys. Instead, it has several open holes (as on a recorder) which the player closes or opens with his fingers while blowing into the reed of the mouthpiece. As with other wind instruments, the Shehnai calls for a great deal of finger dexterity and superb breath control. The sound of this instrument, at times mournful and other times joyously chirping, is familiar to all the inhabitants of India. For, besides being closely associated with temple music, it is regarded as indispensable at all weddings.

The Music

Side 1

Duetto (Jugalbandi)

Raga: Gujarare-Todi
Both Ustad Vilayat Khan and Ustad Bismillah Khan handle their respective instruments with dexterity and skill to bring out all of the serenity and pathos of this Raga. During the first few minutes, with the help of short “alaps,” they lay a foundation for the Raga and gradually unfold a vivid synthesis of harmony and the melody. The subtle “Taan” patterns (note combinations) used to embellish this performance demonstrate the performers’ artistic mastery.

Side 2

Chaiti-Dhun
Here is a typically lilting folk tune of India’s Uttar Pradesh region. It is immensely popular with audiences and draws its name “Chaitra,” which is the first month of the Hindu calendar and the month during which it is most frequently performed.

Glossary

RAGA: The Raga is an Indian scale which utilizes varying ascending and descending patterns — certain notes on the way up and certain notes on the way down — but always in a set sequence. The Raga never has fewer than five notes — the minimum required for a tune.

DHUN: A Dhun is a tune accompanied by Tala (Rhythm) which is usually played in a fast tempo and which creates a mood of ecstasy.

THUMREE: A romantic, lyrical style.

ALAP: The slow and serene opening of a Raga — unaccompanied and without rhythm — which sets the mood of the composition.

GAT: A fixed composition for instruments in any “tala” around which an improvisation is woven.

Prepared for release in the U.S.A. by BILL MILLER
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New Shearing versions of Shearing
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Don't Blame Me; Pick Yourself Up; more.
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sial psychedelic drug: scholarly pros
& cons; addict comments; music; et al.
STEREO: STA0 2574 MONO: TAO 2574

LSD
DUETS FROM INDIA
VILAYAT KHAN and BISMILLAH KHAN
With Tabla accompaniment by Shantan Prasad

STEREO
ST-10483
(33-1/3 rpm)

1. DUETTO (JUGALBANDI)
Raga: Gujaroa - Todi
[24:48]
DUETS FROM INDIA
VILAYAT KHAN and BISMILLAH KHAN
With Tabla accompaniment by Shanta Prasad
ST-104113
STEREO
1. CHAITI - DHUN (12:56)
2. BHAIREE - THUMREE (13:21)