



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC PAIRED WITH PROKOFIEV'S *ROMEO AND JULIET* AT ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT

ATLANTA – The **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra** welcomes Indian classical music star Amjad Ali Khan to perform his sarod concerto during the second concerts of the Delta Classical Series on Thursday and Sunday, October 19 and 21 at 8pm at Atlanta Symphony Hall. The free ***Visions of India Festival*** will precede the Saturday concert in the lobby of the Memorial Arts Building, starting at 5pm.

Cultures unite when the orchestra performs *Samaagam*, a sarod concerto featuring ragas composed by Khan who will perform with his family of acclaimed sarod artists. The sarod is a fretless stringed instrument that is one of the most important concert instruments in Hindustani music. It has sympathetic strings that give it a resonant quality and a deep, introspective sound.

Khan has been a tireless campaigner for peace and understanding between communities in India and has upheld these values in his own life. While he is a Muslim, his wife Subhalakshmi Khan, once a prominent Indian Classical Dancer, is a Hindu. Their children were raised in both traditions. Khan chose the title “Samaagam,” because it is a word that means confluence, meeting, or coming together.

The ASO’s Vice President of Artistic Development, Gaetan Le Divelec was Khan’s manager for many years before coming to Atlanta and was influential in the development of the concerto. “When I came to Atlanta last year, it was really clear to me that I was joining an institution that was, first of all, adventurous with programming, but also had an interest in fostering diversity and inclusion in classical music,” said Le Divelec. “For me, it became obvious that *Samaagam* would be one of the works that could achieve that.”

He went on to say, “This is a unique opportunity for people who are in the world of Western classical music to access Indian classical and vice versa. That’s the ideal outcome, for those two audiences to get a glimpse of the other tradition.”

Russian conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya has worked closely with Khan in the past and will also lead the orchestra in two other works, including the suite from Prokofiev’s ballet masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet*— a work that moves from bellicose furor to aching poignancy with some white-knuckle violin playing in between. The program opens with Gabriela Lena Frank’s (b. 1972) stirring *Elegía Andina*, a piece that mixes strains of Peruvian folk song with contemporary sounds to highlight the composer’s multicultural heritage.

Before the Saturday performance, the free **Visions of India Festival** celebrates vibrant elements of Indian culture, including mesmerizing dance performances, an art display, Henna artist stations, an interactive instrument booth, Indian cuisine, and more. Plus, there will be a lively after-party with treats, live music, and a chance to mingle with musicians. The festival is being held in conjunction with the Fulton County Arts + Culture [Visions of India Exhibit](#).

FREE FESTIVAL

Visions of India

Saturday, October 21, 5-8pm

Lobby, Memorial Arts Building, Woodruff Arts Center

Festival Includes:

- Artist display by Malika Ghosh Garrett
- Henna artist stations by Farhat's Henna Art, Henna Rubina and Arzoo Jaipuri
- Dancing from Jathiswara School of Dance at 5:30, 6:30 and 7:30
- Mandala art station by Shashikala Foundation
- Food from TABLA Midtown (*for purchase*)
- Floral arrangements from Vivek Flowers
- Interactive Instrument Booth

CONCERT

Folk Tales, Ragas and Lost Love

Thursday, October 19, 8pm

Saturday, October 21, 8pm

Atlanta Symphony Hall, Woodruff Arts Center

Lidiya Yankovskaya, conductor

Amjad Ali Khan, sarod

Amaan Ali Bangash, sarod

Ayaan Ali Bangash, sarod

Shane Shanahan, percussion

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

GABRIELA LENA FRANK: *Elegía Andina* (Andean Elegy)

AMJAD ALI KHAN: *Samaagam*

PROKOFIEV: Suite from *Romeo & Juliet*

Cultures unite in *Samaagam*, a concerto for sarod and orchestra from the Indian classical music tradition. Pairing it with Prokofiev's ballet masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet* imbues both works with fresh energy. The concert opens with *Elegía Andina*, a piece that mixes strains of Peruvian folk songs with contemporary sounds.

Tickets are available at aso.org.

ABOUT AMJAD ALI KHAN

He was all of 6 years old when Amjad Ali Khan gave his first recital of Sarod and today he shoulders the sixth generation of inheritance in this legendary lineage. After his debut, the career path of this musical legend took the speed of light, and on its way, the Indian classical music scene was witness to regular and scintillating bursts of Raga supernovas.

He is a recipient of the UNESCO Award, Padma Vibhushan (Highest Indian civilian award), and UNICEF's National Ambassadorship. He represented India in the first World Arts Summit in Venice in 1991, and received honorary Citizenship to the States of Texas (1997), Massachusetts (1984), Tennessee (1997), the city of Atlanta, Georgia (2002), Albuquerque, NM (2007). In 1995, Mr. Khan awarded the Gandhi UNESCO Medal in Paris for his composition "Bapukauns." In 2003, the maestro received "Commander of the Order of Arts and letters" from the French Government and the Fukuoka Cultural Grand Prize in Japan in 2004.

He has been a visiting professor at Stanford University, Indiana University, York University, Washington University, Stony Brook, North Eastern and New Mexico University.

On the ninth anniversary of 9/11, Amjad Ali Khan gave a Peace Concert at the United Nations in New York in the presence of the UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon.

He has been a regular performer at the Carnegie Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Kennedy Center, Sanctuary Hall (First Indian performer), House of Commons, Victoria Hall in Geneva, Chicago Symphony Center, Palais beaux-arts, Mozart Hall in Frankfurt, St. James Palace and the Opera House in Australia.

Two books have been written on him. The first is titled, "The World of Amjad Ali Khan" by UBS Publishers in 1995 and the second, "Abba-God's Greatest Gift to Us" by his sons, Amaan and Ayaan published by Roli Books-Lustre Publications in 2002. A documentary on Mr. Khan called "Strings for Freedom" won the Bengal Film Journalist Association Award and was also screened at the Ankara Film Festival in 1996. Khan authored his first book, "My Father, Our Fraternity," in December 2012, an intensely personal memoir that brings alive the rich classical music tradition from the early twentieth century to the present.

In 2008, his concerto for Sarod, "Samaagam," premiered with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, which was the latest embodiment of his unique ability to give new form to the purity and discipline of the Indian classical music tradition. In 2009, Mr. Khan was nominated for a Grammy award in the Best Traditional World Music Album category. "Samaagam" was released worldwide in April 2011 on Harmonia Mundi's World Village label.

In 2014, Amjad Ali Khan, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash performed at the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in Oslo, Norway as well as the Nobel Peace Prize Concert along with the lineup of Queen Latifa, Steven Tyler, Nuno Bettencourt and Laura Mvula.

The UN Day Concert 2018 featured Sarod virtuoso Amjad Ali Khan, accompanied by his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash, and the Refugee Orchestra Project conducted by Lidiya Yankovskaya, Conductor.

Married and with two sons, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash are well-known names in the music scene and are the seventh generation of musicians in the family. Amjad Ali Khan's wife Subhalakshmi Khan has been a great exponent of the Indian classical dance, Bharatnatyam, which, she sacrificed for her family.

ABOUT AMAAN ALI BANGASH

Amaan Ali Bangash is the eldest son and disciple of the Sarod Maestro Amjad Ali Khan and grandson of Haafiz Ali Khan. He belongs to the seventh generation in an unbroken chain of the Senia Bangash School. He was initiated by his father into the fine art of Sarod playing and gave his first public performance at age eight. Amaan's musical style is marked by its precision in tunefulness, bold and

resonant strokes, along with tradition and continuity of Indian Classical Music. Amaan's performances have evoked creditable applause. Today, Amaan is considered one of the finest Sarod players in the world and has obtained a very special place for himself among music enthusiasts across continents. He is an inspiration for the younger generation of musicians. He continues to enchant audiences with his virtuosity, sheer brilliance and charismatic stage presence.

ABOUT AYAAN ALI BANGASH

Ayaan Ali Bangash represents the seventh generation of a musical lineage known as the Senia Bangash School. The younger son and disciple of the Sarod Maestro Amjad Ali Khan, Ayaan stepped into the world of music and the Sarod, at a very early age, with confidence, clarity, consistency and technical mastery all of which he learned at his father's knees. Ayaan made his solo debut when he was eight years old and has been performing concerts in India and abroad since then. He has also assisted his illustrious father at concerts all over the world. His approach, vision and versatility make him an icon for the youth in the music industry. His contribution in making the Sarod a cross-over instrument in a variety of genres has projected him as an artist of high repute.

Amaan Ali Bangash & Ayaan Ali Bangash joined Gwen Stefani, Jon Bon Jovi for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Inductee and multi-GRAMMY Award-winning musician Joe Walsh's Vetsaid Charity Concert in December 2020. Amaan and Ayaan joined together with their father Amjad Ali Khan with Joe Walsh for a 3 song EP named 'Prayers' as a tribute to doctors and frontline workers during the pandemic.

ABOUT SHANE SHANAHAN

Shane Shanahan has combined his studies of drumming traditions from around the world with his background in jazz, rock and Western art music to create his own unique, highly sought-after style. Since 2000, he has been touring around the globe performing with Yo-Yo Ma as a founding member of the genre-defying, Grammy® Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble and served as Co-Artistic Director (2017-2020) and Learning Programs Advisor (2012-2020) for the organization.

In addition to his playing, his arrangements and compositions are featured on several of the group's recordings and he can be heard and seen on Mr. Ma's Grammy® Award-winning holiday CD/DVD release, *Songs of Joy And Peace*. Shane has performed and/or recorded with Bobby McFerrin, Aretha Franklin, James Taylor, Philip Glass, Alison Krauss, Deep Purple, Jordi Savall, Sonny Fortune, Chaka Khan, Bill Frisell and Glen Velez, among others. Shane's dynamic performances have brought people to their feet in the greatest concert halls of the world, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Concertgebouw, Santory Hall, Disney Hall, and the Hollywood Bowl. He has also performed twice for President and First Lady Obama, once at the White House and once at the Kennedy Center Honors.

A strong believer in the transformative power of education, Shane frequently presents workshops and clinics at the world's leading universities, including Princeton, Harvard, Cornell, The Eastman School of Music, Juilliard, and the University of Michigan. In 2017 he was a Blodgett Distinguished Artist at Harvard University, where he co-taught a course with Ethnomusicology faculty.

For the last several years Shane has been engaged in intensive work with students of all ages at the Lane Deer School on an Indian American Reservation in Montana. Shane has also played in the pit orchestras of several Broadway musicals.

ABOUT LIDIYA YANKOVSKAYA

Lidiya Yankovskaya is a fiercely committed advocate for Slavic masterpieces, operatic rarities, and contemporary works on the leading edge of classical music. She has conducted more than 40 world

premieres, including 17 operas, and her strength as a visionary collaborator has guided new perspectives on staged and symphonic repertoire from *Carmen* and *Queen of Spades* to Price and Prokofiev. Since her appointment as Music Director of the Chicago Opera Theater in 2017, Ms. Yankovskaya has led many Chicago premieres of recent works.

On the concert stage, recent engagements include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and Julia Wolfe's *Anthracite Fields* with Bang on a Can All-Stars and The Choir of Trinity Wall Street at Carnegie Hall.

Ms. Yankovskaya has recently conducted operatic productions at the Houston Grand Opera, Seattle Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Spoleto Festival USA, Wolf Trap Opera, Washington National Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival. Ms. Yankovskaya is Founder and Artistic Director of the Refugee Orchestra Project, which proclaims the cultural and societal relevance of refugees through music, and has brought that message to hundreds of thousands of listeners around the world.

ABOUT THE ASO

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives, and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences. The ASO engages the diverse international community of our city, bringing people together in harmony—including our youngest citizens, with extensive opportunities for youth and families to fall in love with music. Two of the hallmark education programs celebrate anniversaries this season: the Atlanta Youth Symphony Orchestra celebrates 50 years and the Talent Development Program turns 30.

The Orchestra's range and depth are featured in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert, Family Concerts, Coca-Cola Holiday series, and many community and education concerts. In addition, the ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. The ASO also performs with the ASO Chorus, originally founded by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 Grammy® Award-winning recordings.

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