

Saturday, April 29, 2006, 8pm  
Zellerbach Hall

Zakir Hussain  
*presents*  
Masters of Percussion  
*An Evening Honoring Ustad Allarakha*



*with*

Fazal Qureshi *tabla and kanjira*  
Taufiq Qureshi *percussion*  
Bhavani Shankar *pakhawaj and dholak*  
Khetee Khan *khartal*  
Manipuri Jagoi Marup *dancing drummers of Manipur*  
*and special guests*  
Ustad Sultan Khan *sarangi*  
Niladri Kumar *sitar*

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Zakir Hussain Presents Masters of Percussion is a biennial tour presented by *tabla* virtuoso and percussion legend Zakir Hussain. This evening's concert is the first of this year's tour, celebrating what would have been the 87th birthday of *tabla* maestro extraordinaire Ustad Allarakha, a groundbreaking artist whose influence has gone beyond his own Hindustani (North Indian) tradition to shape the world of music and percussion as we know it today. This evening is very special, since all three of Ustad Allarakha's sons, Zakir Hussain, Fazal Qureshi and Taufiq Qureshi, are performing.

The incomparable duet tours of Ustad Allarakha and his son and chief disciple Zakir Hussain were the prelude to the Masters of Percussion ensemble. The duet became a *tabla* trio with the addition of Zakir's younger brother Fazal Qureshi and then widened its scope to include Zakir's groundbreaking collaborations with Karnatak (South Indian) percussionists, with musicians from both contemporary and classical genres and with artists from India's colorful and dynamic folk traditions. Masters of Percussion occupies both a seminal and influential position in today's expanding percussion scene.

This concert will feature the traditional repertoire of North Indian drumming on *tabla* in solo and duet as well as excursions exploring the frontier between traditional and contemporary, folk and classical music. Under the direction of Zakir Hussain, the concert is an opportunity to experience both melodic (*raga*) and rhythmic (*tala*) development.

Zakir Hussain and Masters of Percussion are honored to perform for Cal Performances in this Centennial year.

ABOUT THE INSTRUMENTS

*Tabla* is the premier Hindustani classical concert drum. It is two drums, one *dayan* and one *banya*, treble and bass respectively. The *dayan* is tuned to the tonic, its goatskin head tuned with the aid of a coal tar center, straps, pegs and the musician's tuning hammer. The *banya* is usually metal and also has a goatskin head and *gob* (coal tar resonating center). Capable of an amazing range

of sounds and modulations, the *tabla* has six *gharanas* or styles in North India. Zakir Hussain and Fazal Qureshi represent the Punjab *gharana* of *tabla*.

*Pakhawaj*, widely considered a forebear of the *tabla*, is a two-headed cylindrical drum which accompanied North Indian classical music exclusively during the age of *dhrupad*, the oldest style of Hindustani classical music. A powerful and resonant instrument, it is made of wood and tuned with pegs and straps. The bass end of the *pakhawaj* is covered with a dough applied before each performance.

*Kanjira* is a classical Karnatak (South Indian) frame drum resembling a small tambourine; its diminutive size belies its amazing versatility and scope. Made of lizard skin stretched over a wooden frame with one cymbal incorporated into its makeup, it is played with one hand only while the other hand holds and modulates it.

*Dholak* is a two-headed folk drum of North India, used to accompany folk and devotional music.

*Khartal* is a folk instrument of Rajasthan, made of four flat pieces of wood, two held in each hand.

*Dhol* and *Pong* are folk drums of Manipur.

*Sarangi* is a North Indian bowed instrument of tremendous complexity. With a wooden body, ivory pegs and gut strings played not with the fingertips but against the flesh above the knuckles, it is the instrument considered to be most like the human voice. It has three playing strings and 36 sympathetic strings and is emerging from its status as an accompanying instrument only (to vocal music, Kathak dance and *tabla* solo) through the efforts of Ustad Sultan Khan and a few other present-day maestros.

*Sitar* is a major instrument of great and legendary stature and tradition in North Indian classical music. Its body is made of gourd and its long, fretted wooden neck is strung with four playing strings, two *chikari* (rhythm) strings and 13 sympathetic strings.



**Zakir Hussain**, a classical *tabla* maestro of the first order, has made unprecedented strides in bringing his instrument to a global audience. Widely appreciated as an international phenomenon, his consistently brilliant and exciting performances

have established him globally as one of India's most renowned cultural ambassadors. The favorite accompanist for most of the greatest classical musicians and dancers of India, Zakir has also been a chief architect of the world music movement with his prodigious, incomparable and historic collaborations. The foremost disciple of his father, the legendary Ustad Allarakha, Zakir was a child prodigy who began his professional career at the age of 12 and was already touring internationally with great success by the age of 18. Zakir has been the recipient of many awards and honors, including the 2002 "Padma Bhushan," "Padma Shri," the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the 1999 National Heritage Fellowship Award, the United States' highest award for masters in the traditional arts. His playing is marked by uncanny intuition and masterful improvisational dexterity, founded in formidable knowledge and study.

Zakir's career includes much work as a composer, having composed music for many film scores and, most recently, the music for the opening ceremonies of the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. He also performs and records on a dazzling array of percussion instruments and has received a Grammy Award (1991 Best World Music Album) for his part as performer, composer and co-producer of *Planet Drum*. His album *Saturday Night in Bombay*, with his band Remember Shakti, was nominated for a World Music Grammy in 2002. Most recently, he received a special com-

mission to compose for the Silk Road Project, in which he performed live with cellist Yo-Yo Ma for the Mark Morris Dance Group.



**Fazal Qureshi** began his training early under the keen eye of his father and guru, Ustad Allarakha. With encouragement and inspiration from his elder brother Zakir Hussain, Fazal has developed a style distinguished by a fine sense of rhythm, versatility and eloquence. He has per-

formed both as a soloist and as an accompanist in prestigious "Sangeet Sammelans" in India as well as major festivals abroad. The remarkable ease with which Fazal accompanies veteran as well as young Indian classical instrumentalists, vocalists and dancers of both North and South, as well as Western instrumentalists, speaks of the discipline and dedication with which this young, talented artist has pursued music.



**Taufiq Qureshi**, an ace percussionist of India, is also an acclaimed composer. Being the son and disciple of the legendary *tabla* maestro Ustad Allarakha, Taufiq's performances showcase the traditional flavor and intricacies of Indian rhythm and the sparkle of contemporary world percussion. Taufiq's trademark style incorporates body and vocal percussion to create unique rhythmic motifs spanning across cultures. His sense of tone and

his command over a wide variety of percussion instruments and styles is phenomenal. His albums have been released internationally and he has performed at prestigious music festivals all over the globe. Taufiq has been greatly influenced by his illustrious brother Zakir Hussain and is privileged to receive guidance from Ghatam Vidhwan Pandit "Vikku" Vinayakram. While the realm of studio music keeps him constantly engaged creatively, Taufiq is continuously evolving as a percussionist in the ever-inspiring world of live performance.



**Bhavani Shankar** is one of India's leading *pakhawaj* players. He has

toured extensively with Zakir Hussain and with leading maestros of Indian classical music. A versatile percussionist, he is brilliant on a host of other drums, including the *dholak*. From a family of *kathakas*, he is versed in the ancient *slokas* (poetical compositions) and rhythmic compositions of these storytellers.



**Khete Khan** is a brilliant young musician born into the Manganiyar caste of musicians living near the beautiful city of Jaisalmer in western Rajasthan. He is the son of Pempa Khan, a renowned *surmai* and *shehnai* player in the folk tradition of the region. His entire family of uncles, cousins and brothers are all musicians, the most famous of whom is his uncle, Sakkar Khan, maestro of the bowed *kamaicha*.

Khete's instrument is the *khartal*, an unusual percussion instrument comprising four small flat rectangular pieces of wood held two in each hand. Both an outstanding soloist and accompanist,

Khete has taken the art of playing *khartal* beyond its folk idiom, having developed an extraordinary and refined technique.



**Manipuri Jagoi Marup** is one of India's premier performance troupes, combining dance, drumming and martial arts in their repertoire. Dedicated to the rejuvenation of traditional folk and classical Manipuri dance styles, the troupe was established in 1963 by the late Guru Padmashri Amubi Singh, have performed thousands of concerts in India and have enjoyed many successful international tours. Known for their dynamic athleticism and proficiency and their unique-sounding drums, they are a visual feast, dazzling audiences with their acrobatic choreography.



**Ustad Sultan Khan** is one of the foremost *sarangi* players of India, renowned for his extraordinary technical and melodic control over this difficult stringed instrument. A representative of the Indore *gharana*, Sultan Khansahib is the grandson of

Ustad Azim Khan, a renowned *sarangi* player of his time, and the son of Ustad Ghulab Khan, who

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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is both an acknowledged *sarangi* player and vocalist. The instrument most like the human voice, the *sarangi* is an exquisitely sonorous bowing instrument. The classical music audience has recently enjoyed its ascendance to solo performance status through the efforts of artists like Ustad Sultan Khan, whose solo performance is widely in demand all over the world.

Sultan Khansahib began his initial training with his father Ustad Ghulab Khan, and, by the age of 11, gave his first solo performance at the All-India Musical Conference. In 1974, he joined Beatle George Harrison and Pandit Ravi Shankar's "Dark Horse" tour. Since then, he has been taking his music to concert halls around the globe, has recorded widely and has gained increasing popularity among classical and world music audiences. He has a longstanding creative relationship with Zakir Hussain, performing, touring, recording and composing together for more than 20 years.



**Niladri Kumar**, son and disciple of celebrated *sitar* player Pandit Kartick Kumar, is one of India's finest young *sitar*

virtuosos, already recognized for his dazzling technical prowess and the maturity of his melodic acumen. A rare instrumentalist equally at home playing traditional classical or contemporary world music, he has proven to be one of the brightest talents of his generation, regarded with high esteem by his peers and promising to extend the musical horizon.