

Friday, September 28, 2007  
Zellerbach Hall

## Global Drum Project



*(l-r) Giovanni Hidalgo, Ustad Zakir Hussain, Mickey Hart, Sikiru Adepoju*

Mickey Hart  
Ustad Zakir Hussain  
Sikiru Adepoju  
Giovanni Hidalgo

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# About the Artists

## Global Drum Project

**Mickey Hart** is best known for his nearly three decades as an integral part of an extraordinary expedition into the soul and spirit of music, disguised as the rock 'n' roll band the Grateful Dead. He has also taken part in many collaborations with other musicians, including Planet Drum, Diga and the Mickey Hart Band. He produced the “World” series of ethnomusicological recordings on Rykodisc, and is a member of the Board of Trustees at the Library of Congress’s American Folklife Center, where he heads the subcommittee on digitization and preservation of the Center’s collections. He has written several books, including *Drumming at the Edge of Magic*, *Planet Drum* and *Songcatchers: In Search of the World’s Music*, and contributed music to many film and television projects, including *Apocalypse Now*, *Gang Related* and *The America’s Cup: The Walter Cronkite Report*.

In the 1980s, Hart gathered together his favorite partners in rhythm—among them Ustad Zakir Hussain, the maestro of the Indian tabla, Sikiru Adepoju, the Mozart of the Nigerian talking drum, and (a little later) Giovanni Hidalgo, the master of the Afro-Cuban congas, and they formed Planet Drum, which went on to win the first-ever Grammy Award for “World Music.” In 2007, as these four musicians prepared to return again to stages across the country, it became appropriate to establish a new name, Global Drum Project, for a new time.

Ustad (“Master”) **Zakir Hussain** is the preeminent tabla player and classical Indian musician of his generation. The son of the legendary Ustad Alla Rakha, partner to Ravi Shankar and himself the master tabla player of his own generation, he was a child prodigy who began touring at the age of 12, came to the United States in 1970, and has had a glittering international career ever since. In addition to being the master tabla player of Indian classical music, the accompanist of choice to Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan and Shivkumar Sharma, he has pursued collaborations with western musicians like John McLaughlin (Shakti), Charles Lloyd, Yo-Yo Ma and Mickey Hart that have further carried Indian music around the world. His

solo releases, beginning with *Making Music* in 1987, have won great acclaim, and his Moment Records label is a major source of Indian music worldwide. He has also created the soundtracks to many films, including Bernardo Bertolucci’s *Little Buddha* and many Merchant Ivory productions.

**Sikiru Adepoju** was born in Eruwa, Nigeria, to a musical family, and was taught drumming by his father, Chief Ayanieke Adepoju—“Ayan” means “descended from drummers.” While still in his teens, he became associated with one of the pioneer creators of Afro-Beat, Chief Commander Ebenezer Obey. Sikiru came to the United States in 1985 to play with O. J. Ekemode’s Nigerian All-Stars, and a year later he became the chief partner to the man who brought African drumming to the United States, Babatunde Olatunji. As a star member of Drums of Passion and then Planet Drum, he has become well known across the country, and helped to create the Spirit Drum Festival, a tribute to the late Ojatuni, in collaboration with Jim Donovan of Rusted Root and others. He has recorded with Carlos Santana, Airto Moreira, the String Cheese Incident and Stevie Wonder.

**Giovanni Hidalgo** was born in Puerto Rico and grew up in a home filled with the drums used by his father and grandfather. His first instrument was a homemade conga built by his father from a barrel. In the early 1980s, he went to Cuba to work with Batacumbele; there he met the great Changuito, and the resulting album established Hidalgo’s hand drumming technique as the baseline of Latin percussion. A few years later, he fell into a relationship with the iconic American jazz trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie—who’d been sensitive to Latin percussion and music since the 1940s—and Giovanni became a member of the United Nations Jazz Orchestra. In the 1990s, Giovanni took a four-year sabbatical from touring to teach at the Berklee College of Music, in the process further incorporating many Latin rhythms with reggae, African and jazz beats into his music. Like his three partners in the Global Drum Project, he has no peer in his particular genre.