

PEACE WORSHIPERS



AMJAD ALI KHAN, Sarod
AMAAN ALI BANGASH, Sarod
AYAAN ALI BANGASH, Sarod
ELMIRA DARVAROVA, Violin

Affetto
AF1706

Reflections on this recording

by George Mathew

PEACE WORSHIPERS represents the culmination of a collaboration that came about through a serendipitous meeting of the artists in 2014 – Amjad Ali Khan, the Titan of the sarod, straddling two centuries, universally venerated as one of the greatest living Indian musicians in any genre; his sons, disciples and widely acclaimed sarod virtuosos in their own right, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash; and the distinguished American violinist Elmira Darvarova, herself a historical figure as the first ever (and so far only) woman-concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York. This recording emerges from Amjad Ali Khan's deep and long abiding commitment to peace and tolerance both in the larger world as well as in the smaller communities of city, neighborhood, and the circles of family and friends – a commitment which has taken him to the United Nations and the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in Oslo as well as the greatest concert halls and performing venues around the world.

This album is the fruit of an approach that these artists have championed in their trilogy of collaborative recordings, SOUL STRINGS, then AMALGAM and now PEACE WORSHIPERS – boldly sharing their respective traditions and genres with each other while keeping the integrity and character of those traditions intact and exploring the idiom and styles of the other with fearless, ferocious energy and generous enthusiasm. In this final volume, alongside the compositions of Amjad Ali Khan, are works from regional folk traditions in India and Europe.

Maestro Amjad Ali Khan often invokes the phrase “*Swar he Ishwar*” (“The note is God”) and the discourse between instruments is a kind of meditative exploration on the nature of sonoral divinity. Often, in the music of this album and indeed across the decades of his career and, one suspects, in his teaching as well, Amjad Ali Khan's sarod frequently flashes an incandescent hush into an ethereal *pianissimo* quietness, requiring not only for the musicians onstage to immediately reciprocate but also requiring the audience to drop whatever thoughts might be littering one's mind and instantly move into the space of musical silence invoked onstage – a kind of musical peace that lies beyond the realm of understanding but requires trust and indeed faith. This gesture has come to be a signature sound for him and in this disc it finds profound utterance in the next generation of this remarkable musical family.

Track 1. *Gentle Sunset*, is the first of the works in this collection composed by Amjad Ali Khan. It stands in a 16-beat meter set in Raga *Marwa*, a hexatonic (6-tone) raga which omits the fifth note, the *pa* of the scale. *Marwa* is often associated with romantic love and the gentleness of dusk. The exposition or *Alaap* opens with an unearthly tremolo in the violin as she makes a partial sweep through the notes of the Raga lending the first phrases a misty quasi-atonal atmosphere almost “from another planet”; reminiscent of the Second Viennese School of early 20th Century European music. This ushers in the sarod making his own traversal of the raga often passing introspectively through multiple notes after striking only the first in each group. The violin and sarod take turns, as they often do, in a multi-strophic exploration of the tones of the raga, the violin parsing the scalar aspects and the sarod lingering to introspect on the divine nature of the individual notes. Finally they transition into the body of the composition and the melodic heart of the piece is suddenly revealed to be a concentrated gem of coiled rhythm and power, a gem which also finds expression (albeit in a different raga, *Megh*) in the second movement of Amjad Ali Khan's “*Samaagam*,” his powerfully lyrical Concerto for sarod and orchestra.

Track 2. *Midnight Tenderness*. The scene opens with the sarod pondering a harp-like introduction before actually embarking on the actual notes of the raga *Tilak Kamod*, a late night raga ideally performed during the second quarter of the night. The exposition of this piece, more than any other on this recording, testifies to the sarod's ability to swing between *chiaroscuro* shades of sonic color, especially that shadowy *pianissimo* which hovers on the threshold of audibility, an effect that here finds breathtaking utterance in the next generation of the Senia Bangash Gharana. The violin now arrives as if to redeem, in the fragrant darkness of the midnight hour, the pledge of late night tenderness (to use the idiom of another great admirer of the late night, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru), perhaps “not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially”² indeed. The pentatonic flavor of this first entrance of the violin is redolent with the folk music-inspired romanticism of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Lark Ascending*. The sarod returns with the tones of the raga now beginning to reveal melodic shape and structure much as the light of approaching dawn begins reveal shapes and outlines hidden by the night. The sarod now launches itself into the main melody with an unusual inflection, painting practically every single note and repetition with seductive slides or *gamakas*, very much characteristic of this music but seldom at the note-to-note level. The violin completes the *alaap* with a final survey of the notes with coy perspectives from the upper and lower neighbor tones of each. Now the tabla, hitherto the silent observer at this midnight tryst, raises the curtain and brings up the light on the first joint violin-and-sarod statement of not only the piece but of this recording, as the solo instruments entwine each other in passionate garlands of intensely sweet thirds, consummating this midnight meeting in matching slides also at the interval of a third. The sarod has one final flirtatious nod and wink, worthy of any Bollywood hero, in the pre-dawn moonlight before the two instruments merge in thirds once again and melt into a single lambent flame of ecstasy.

Track 3. *Peaceful Morning* is laid out by its composer Amjad Ali Khan in one of the most universally well known ragas *Bhairavi* in a 6-beat metric cycle. *Bhairavi* related to the Western Phrygian mode, has spread its influence on artists from the Carnatic Trinity of the Thanjavur School to the Kronos Quartet, the Beatles and John Coltrane. The introduction or *alaap* unfolds as a conversation between the sarod and violin in five verses. Already in the first verse, the sarod begins to hint at the melodic contours to be unveiled shortly. During this exchange there again appear hints of Amjad Ali Khan's pathbreaking Concerto for Sarod and Orchestra “*Samaagam*” which actually was being performed the very same week that PEACE-WORSHIPERS was recorded. The tabla appears at the end of the introduction, and with a flourish, tears the veil off the melody which the sarod now unfurls – a kind of cross-rhythmic waltz or *sarabande*, a favorite gesture of Amjad Ali Khan's with this raga. Violin and sarod now rejoice in the joint exposition of this radiant dance with the violin frequently slipping out of the tonal confines of the melody to sip the odd exotic accidental to spice up the proceedings. Following a short bridge section, a variation is introduced by the sarod, triggering a virtuosic eruption from the violin which finally expressively satisfied, returns to declare her solidarity with raga and sarod. A hocketing duet (where the melodic line is completed by the partner) emerges next and sails to its joyous conclusion with a typical cadential *haemiola* (two-against-three cross rhythm) draped with startling exuberance over the primary pulse.

Track 4. *The Brightest of Stars* is rendered in Raga *Durga* by composer Amjad Ali Khan in a 16-beat rhythmic meter. The composer makes his own very plaintive call to us all to recognize human universality in his choice of raga. *Durga* is perhaps the most well known pentatonic raga in Indian music. The pentatonic scale is the most recognizably universal musical artifact that human beings have created in every corner of the known (and probably unknown too) world. The *Alaap* opens with what appears to be a typical examination of the notes by the sarod but closer listening reveals hints of folk music from the East of India – snippets, almost like threads of the folk traditions of

Bengal and Assam appearing in a larger tapestry of classical utterance. The violin responses likewise contain hints of threads this time from the European folk traditions. The intimacy of the violin and sarod, gently interrupting each other's statements while one or the other is still playing, is perhaps as powerful a reminder that peaceful coexistence is not always about giving each other absolute space to speak alone but to invite partner and fellow human beings to share in our own utterances too. As the main body of the work unfurls, the sarod reminds us of its extraordinary ability to sing the fantasy of the repeated note, now dulcimered percussively, now fiercely agitated, now shaded with remarkable legato, finding in the violin the ideal partner to plumb the depths of meaning in the repeated note. Sarod and violin finally blaze across the sky in a fierce 7-beat cadential pattern to ring the curtain down on their astral display.

Track 5. *Romantic Ecstasy* is a Rajasthani folksong cast in Raga *Maand* which is derived from the Rajasthani folk tradition but has found wide currency in both the Hindustani and Carnatic traditions as well as Bollywood. The song is set to a traditional 14-beat metric frame. The Alaap begins with a leisurely but distinct reference to the melodic contours of the melody, its diatonic flavor (profoundly resonant with the western major scale) assuring the ear that the ensuing musical space is a cheerful one. The main melody opens in typical *Maand* fashion with the melodic atmosphere spiced with the allure of seductive "misra" or foreign notes (from outside the gamut of the main raga). The presentation of the main melody is almost operatic in its psychological sophistry. While the sarod keeps its melodic attire poised and elegant, the tabla dives into the passionate turbulence of heart and soul, roiling the depths below as is often the scenario with romantic love.

Track 7. *Enchanted River* is inspired by the boat songs of the peoples of Eastern India in Bengal and Assam. *Bhatiali* refers to the boat song tradition of the Brahmaputra Valley rather than to a particular raga. Cast in a 6-beat rhythmic cycle, *Enchanted River* commences its voyage with a chiming *shruti* or drone with the sarod intoning the tones of the melody before launching into a lyrical melody that is redolent of Bengali folk music. It is no accident that the discerning ear will at once perceive a strong resonance with Rabindranath Tagore's great patriotic anthem *Eklo Cholo Re*, a work and a tradition that appears frequently in the performances of Maestro Amjad Ali Khan and now of his sons, a poignant reminder of how this craft is transmitted. The kinetic values of this music are never too far from the surface, belying its deep connection with movement whether dance or in this instance, the rhythmic rowing of the boat people who inhabit India's great enchanted rivers.

Peace is a strange animal. It is not a simple thing – it is at once a composite condition where people, environments, moods and feelings enjoy the space to be and to explore their own nature as well as the nature of the "other," the "neighbor." In our troubled world and time where strife and conflict seem endless, where the tribal nature of humankind seems to rear its head constantly, the message of this album and the trilogy it completes, is more urgently required than ever before. We desperately need more than ever not just to respect and "tolerate" each other but to actively, generously explore and joyfully celebrate each other's worlds and each other's traditions in as many ways as possible.

© George Mathew, 2017 (George Mathew is the Artistic Director of Music For Life International in New York. He has collaborated as conductor with both Elmira Darvarova and Amjad Ali Khan.)

¹ From Stefan George's poem *Rapture* set by Arnold Schoenberg in his String Quartet No. 2.

² Freely adapted and quoted from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's *Tryst with Destiny* speech to the Indian Constituent Assembly on the eve of India's independence before midnight on August 14th, 1947.

Track 6. *My Burning Tears* by Elmira Darvarova, based on "Grozhdanka", a Bulgarian folk song I have often dreamed of writing a solo violin composition based on the iconic Bulgarian folk song "Grozhdanka" and have finally done it, as a contribution to the message our Peace Trilogy and especially its third installment – PEACE WORSHIPERS brings – a message urging the ceasing of violence, conflicts and blood-shedding. Our world seems to have been at war for a very long time, and even an ancient folk song such as "Grozhdanka" reflects that. In this song, Grozhdanka, the wife of a warrior, cries that she cannot stand anymore to constantly wash his bloodied shirts, and she curses and condemns her husband's violent deeds. The poignant melody depicts Grozhdanka's tear-stained face and her profound, embittered sadness and despair. I combined the simple folk melody with some virtuosic elements, to express the dual nature of my musical upbringing, which has been informed by my ethnic roots, as well as by my technical training as a classical violinist. —Elmira Darvarova



Photo by Imi Singh

Amjad Ali Khan was only six years old when he gave his first Sarod recital. It was the beginning of yet another glorious chapter in the history of Indian classical music. Taught by his father Haafiz Ali Khan, Amjad Ali Khan was born to the illustrious Bangash lineage rooted in the Senia Bangash School of music. Today he shoulders the sixth generation of legacy in this legendary lineage. After his debut, the graph of his legendary career took the speed of light, and on its way the Indian classical music scene witnessed regular and scintillating bursts of Raga supernovas. In his case, the term 'beauty of the Ragas' acquires a special meaning as he has to his credit the distinction of having created many new Ragas. It is love for music and his belief in his music that has enabled him to interpret traditional notions in a new, refreshing way, reiterating the challenge of innovation and yet respecting the timelessness of tradition. Thus, the world saw the art of Sarod performance being given a new and yet timeless interpretation by Amjad Ali Khan. He is one of the few maestros who consider his audience to be the soul of his motivation. As he once said, "There is no essential difference between classical and popular music. Music is music. I want to communicate with the listener who finds Indian classical music remote." Performing regularly at Carnegie Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Kennedy Center, Suntory Hall in Tokyo (first Indian performer), House of Commons, Theatre de la Ville and Musée Guimet in Paris, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Esplanade in Singapore, Victoria Hall in Geneva, Chicago Symphony Center, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Mozart Hall in Frankfurt, St. James Palace and the Opera House in Australia, he has also performed at numerous prestigious festivals worldwide, such as the WOMAD Festival in Adelaide and New Plymouth, Edinburgh Music Festival, World Beat Festival in Brisbane, Taranaki in New Zealand, Summer Arts Festival in Seattle, BBC Proms, International Poets Festival in Rome, Shiraz Festival, UNESCO, Hong Kong Arts Festival, Adelaide Music Festival, Enescu Festival in Bucharest, 1200 Years celebration of Frankfurt WOMAD Rivermead Festival, UK, and Schönbrunn in Vienna. He is a recipient of the UNESCO Award, Padma Vibhushan (highest Indian civilian award), UNICEF's National Ambassadorship, The Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum, and Honorary Doctorates from the University of York, England in 1997, Delhi University in 1998, Rabindra Bharati University in 2007, Kolkata and the Vishva Bharti (Deshikottam) in Shantiniketan in 2001. He represented India in the first World Arts Summit in Venice in 1991, received Honorary Citizenship to the States of Texas (1997), Massachusetts (1984), Tennessee (1997), the city of Atlanta, Georgia (2002), Albuquerque, New Mexico (2007) and the Key of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. April 20th, 1984 was proclaimed as Amjad Ali Khan Day in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1995, Mr. Khan was awarded the Gandhi UNESCO Medal in Paris for his composition *Bapukauns*. In 2003 he received the "Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters" by the French

Government, and the Fukuoka Cultural Grand Prize in Japan in 2004. His collaborations include a piece composed for the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Yoshikazu Fukumora titled *Tribute to Hong Kong*, duets with guitarist Charley Byrd, violinist Elmira Darvarova, soprano Glenda Simpson, guitarist Alvaro Pierri, guitarist Barry Mason, cellists Claudio Bohorquez and Matthew Barley, folk artist Carrie Newcomer. He has been a visiting professor at Stanford University, Indiana University, York University, Washington University, Stony Brook, Northeastern University and New Mexico University. BBC Magazine voted his CD titled '*Bhairav*' among the world's best 50 classical albums for the year 1995, and in 2010 Amjad Ali Khan was nominated for a Grammy® award for '*Ancient Sounds*', a joint-venture with Iraqi oud soloist Rahim AlHaj. In 1999, Mr. Khan inaugurated the World Festival of Sacred Music with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In 1998, Khan composed the signature tune for the 48th International Film Festival. 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. To mark the Hundred years of Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement, Amjad Ali Khan presented a concert at Carnegie Hall in 2006, and in 2007 he performed at the Central Hall of the Indian Parliament, commemorating India's 60th year of Independence. In 2014 his sarod recital was featured at the "*Music for Peace*" event at the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations at the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium at the United Nations. In 2014 Amjad Ali Khan and his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash performed at the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony and Concert in Oslo, Norway, along with a lineup of Queen Latifa, Steven Tyler, Nuno Bettencourt and Laura Mvula. Two books have been written about him: '*The world of Amjad Ali Khan*' (UBS Publishers, 1995) and '*Abba - God's Greatest Gift to us*' by his sons, Amaan and Ayaan (Roli Books - Lustre Publications, 2002). A documentary about Mr. Khan, called '*Strings for Freedom*' won the Bengal Film Journalist Association Award and was also screened at the Ankara Film Festival in 1996. As UK's The Guardian rightly said in 2005: '*It was like watching an Indian classical answer to Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker crashing through their favourite Robert Johnson covers at the Cream revival earlier this month. Amjad Ali Khan may be a master of the sarod rather than the guitar, but once he had built up to the crescendo of his solo set – improvising furiously around the melody line with repeated, rapid-fire playing and then letting his equally frantic tabla player take over – it was easy to see why great Indian music can be as exciting as classic blues and rock.*' Mr. Khan's photograph was included in 2007 in a frieze running the length of the river façade of the Royal Festival Hall in London. In 2012 Khan authored his first book, *My Father, Our Fraternity*, an intensely personal memoir which brings alive the rich classical music tradition from the early twentieth century to the present. Amjad Ali Khan offers an insider's view of this era, through the life and times of his father, the famous sarod icon, Haafiz Ali Khan. The personal and the professional are intertwined in this book as they are in the author's life. His most recent book, *Master on Masters*, about the lives and times of some of the greatest icons of Indian classical music, was published in 2017 by Penguin Random House India. His Sarod concerto *Samaagam* was premiered in 2008 with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra at St. Magnus Festival, at Kirkwall, Orkney Islands, and in 2009 Mr. Khan presented *Samaagam* with the Taipei Chinese Orchestra. *Samaagam* was released worldwide in 2011 on Harmonia Mundi's World Village label. That same season, Amjad Ali Khan was the focus of a 4-concert residency at Wigmore Hall in London, including a new piece with the Britten Sinfonia. As a finale to his residency at Stanford University, Amjad Ali Khan performed with conductor Jindong Cai and the Stanford Philharmonia at the Mozart and More Festival. In 2013 *Ananta Opus 195* - a concerto for Sarod, symphonic and electronic orchestra, written by Pierre Thilloy, was performed by Amjad Ali Khan and his sons, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash, with the Avignon Provence Symphonic Orchestra and the Kords Collective, conducted by Samuel Jean. That same year Amjad Ali Khan presented his Sarod concerto *Samaagam* in France with Orchestre d'Auvergne and Orchestre National d'Île de France, conducted by Kaspar Zehnder. In 2014 Amjad Ali Khan Khan toured India with the Britten Sinfonia. His 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*, with a substantial career, which she sacrificed for her family. In his soul, so in his heart, Amjad Ali Khan is a man who has proven his indomitable belief in the integration of two of life's greatest forces, love and music. He is a living example of a man who practices that integration each day of his life, both on stage and off stage. More info at www.sarod.com



Amaan Ali Bangash is the eldest son and disciple of the iconic Sarod Maestro Amjad Ali Khan, and grandson of Haafiz Ali Khan. Belonging to the seventh generation in an unbroken chain of the Senia Bangash School, he was initiated by his legendary 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. His performances have evoked great accolades and critical acclaim, and today he 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 and continues to enchant audiences with his virtuosity, sheer brilliance and charismatic stage presence. Appearing at the most prestigious venues in India and around the world, he performed at the 1986 Festival of India in Moscow, and made his UK debut in 1990 and his US debut in 1991. He has performed numerous times for HRH the Prince of Wales at St. James Palace in London, has toured Australia twice, and regularly appears at the world's greatest stages, such as Carnegie Hall, Symphony Space and the Metropolitan Museum in New York; Kennedy Center in Washington, DC; the Chicago Symphony Center; the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco; the Getty Center in Los Angeles; the Lensic Performing Arts Center in Santa Fe; the Palais Beaux-Arts in Brussels; the Paris Philharmonie; the Esplanade in Singapore; the Gulbenkian Música in Lisbon; the New York Chamber Music Festival; the Chicago World Music Festival; the Summer Arts Festival in Seattle; the Edinburgh Festival; the Enescu Festival in Bucharest; many WOMAD festivals at various venues around the globe; the Wigmore Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and the Barbican Center in London, as well as many other world-famous venues. Amaan performed at the Indian Parliament for India's 60th year of Independence; presented a concert for Coca Cola at The Fox Theater, Atlanta; performed, together with his father and brother, at the United Nations in New York in the presence of Ban Ki-moon to commemorate the 2009 *Ode to Peace Concert*; performed for Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper at the 2011 Year of India Inauguration at Musée de la Civilisation Theatre in Ottawa; collaborated with oudist Rahim AlHaj for Amjad Ali Khan's Grammy®-nominated project *Ancient Sounds* in 2010 (and again in 2016 on the CD *Infinite Hope*); performed at Stanford University's Dinkelspiel Auditorium at the end of his father's Stanford University residency in 2012. He starred in a 2012 PETA ad strumming his Sarod against a backdrop of birds flying freely across the sky, next to the words "*Bring Harmony to Birds' Lives - Let Birds Fly Free*". For several years Amaan hosted, with his brother Ayaan, the Zee TV music series show 'Sa Re Ga Ma'. The two brothers composed the music score for Academy Award winner Roger Christian's film "*American Daylight*", and were featured with their father in the Real World Records' album '*Moksha*'. Amaan's Wigmore Hall concert with his father and brother was released under the '*Live at Wigmore Hall*' series. After the 2002 release of his solo album titled '*Amaan*', Songlines World Music Magazine hailed him as a "worthy heir to his father's crown". His release *Live in Lisbon*, recorded live at Grande Auditório Gulbenkian, produced by Sarod Records (co-founded by Amaan and Ayaan) was released in 2012 on iTunes. Amaan and Ayaan composed two customized special albums – *New Delhi* (2011) and *Raga* (2013) for The Leela Palaces Hotels and Resorts, and also released with their father and guru, Amjad Ali Khan, the albums "*The Music Room*" and '*Sarod Symphony*'. The brothers' electronica lounge albums *Reincarnation* (2005) and

Truth (2006) won them great critical acclaim, and their collaboration with cellist Matthew Barley and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain resulted in the album *'Strings Attached'*. Amaan and Ayaan's 2012 album *Rang - Colors of Sufism* features their interpretations of traditional Qawwalis on the Sarod, and, together with their father, they premiered a collaborative project with the American folk artist Carrie Newcomer called *'Everything Is Everywhere'*. In 2013 they released *Headwaters* with the American hammered dulcimer performer, Malcolm Dalglish. Two of Amaan and Ayaan's newest releases are the 2016 *Infinite Hope*, in which, together with their father, they collaborate once again with the noted oud virtuoso Rahim AlHaj, and the 2017 CD *Journey - Rabab to Sarod* with the esteemed rabab master Daud Khan Sadozai, a collaboration in which sarod and rabab were recorded together for the first time. Amaan also collaborated with the Derek Trucks Band at the Savannah Music Festival, and with Evelyn Glennie at the Rhythm Sticks Festival in London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. In 2013 Amaan presented his father's sarod concerto *Samaagam* with the London Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by David Murphy, and premiered in India, together with his father and brother, *Ananta Opus 195*, a concerto for sarod, symphonic and electronic orchestra by Pierre Thilloy. In 2014 Amaan toured India with the Britten Sinfonia, and performed with his father and brother at the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony and Concert in Oslo, Norway, along with Queen Latifa and Steven Tyler. Recipient of the Provogue Society's Young Achievers Award for the Performing Arts, Amaan also received the MTV's Lycra Award for the Most Stylish Person in Music. The Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma presented him with the Keys to the City along with an honorary citizenship and the Bharat Shiromani Award for instrumental music. He was also celebrated for his achievements over the years by the Swiss brand Raymond Weil at the launch of their 2011 *Freelancer* collection of timepieces. Amaan has also anchored *Top Drive*, the all-new television series on Star World that was aired in January 2003 for five episodes. He also took part in the relay for the 2004 Athens Olympics in New Delhi in June 2004. Amaan co-authored with his brother Ayaan the book *'Abba - God's greatest gift to us'* about their father's life, published by Roli Books, Lustre Publications as part of their 'Family Pride' series, and in 2010 the two brothers co-authored their second book, called *'50 Maestros 50 Recordings'* for Harper Collins. Since 2015, sarod virtuosos Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash have joined forces with American violinist Elmira Darvarova to create a unique collaboration, performing compositions by Amjad Ali Khan. The first fruit of this meeting was their recording *SOUL STRINGS*, released in 2015 by Affetto/Naxos, a bridge across which their respective traditions were carried whole and uncompromised. What that first album suggested subtly, about this daring, supercharged, yet profoundly respectful and even affectionate meeting of musical minds, was brilliantly confirmed by their second CD, *AMALGAM*, a 2016 Affetto/Naxos release, for which the artists were joined by maestro Amjad Ali Khan. The present release *PEACE WORSHIPERS* completes the *Peace Trilogy*, carrying a powerful message through its intensely wrought music language, appealing for peace, tolerance and harmony in a troubled world and environment. More info at www.amaanalibangash.com



Photo by Inni Singh

Ayaan Ali Bangash represents the seventh generation of a musical lineage known as the Senia Bangash School. The younger son and disciple of legendary 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 learnt at his father's knees. Making his solo debut at age eight, and performing concerts in India and abroad since then, he has also assisted his illustrious father at concerts all over the world. With his visionary approach and versatility, he has carved out a special niche for himself in the world of music, and his contribution in making the Sarod a cross-over instrument in a variety of genres has projected him as an artist of high repute. Since his 1989 UK debut and his 1991 US debut, Ayaan has toured the world and has performed regularly at prestigious venues such

as Carnegie Hall, New York's Metropolitan Museum, Town Hall and Symphony Space; Chicago Symphony Center; the Smithsonian; San Francisco Palace of Fine Arts; Getty Center in Los Angeles; Palais Beaux-Arts in Brussels; Esplanade in Singapore; Vienna's Konzerthaus; Amsterdam's Concertgebouw; Paris Philharmonie; Sydney Opera House; Seattle Summer Arts Festival; New York Chamber Music Festival; Chicago World Music Festival; Edinburgh Music Festival; the Wigmore Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Royal Festival Hall in London, among many others. He has performed several times for HRH the Prince of Wales at St. James Palace, appeared at the inaugural Dalai Lama's Sacred Music Festival in New Delhi, and at the Indian Parliament for India's 60th year of Independence, and performed, together with his father and brother, at the United Nations in New York in the presence of Ban Ki-moon to commemorate the 2009 *Ode to Peace Concert*. For several years Ayaan hosted, together with his brother Amaan, the Zee TV music series show 'Sa Re Ga Ma'. He starred in a recent PETA ad strumming his sarod against a backdrop of birds flying freely across the sky, next to the words *"Bring Harmony to Birds' Lives - Let Birds Fly Free"*. He co-authored with his brother in 2002 a book about their father's life, titled *'Abba - God's Greatest Gift to us'*, published by Roli Books, Lustre Publications under their 'Family Pride' series, and in 2010 Ayaan and Amaan released their second book titled *"50 Maestros 50 Recordings"*, published by Harper Collins. Ayaan performed with British cellist Mathew Barley and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain at the Royal Festival Hall, and collaborated with Evelyn Glennie at the Rhythm Sticks Festival at Queen Elizabeth Hall, as well as with guitarist Derek Trucks of the Allman Brothers Band at the Savannah Festival, and with folk singer Carrie Newcomer for *Everything Is Everywhere* (premiered at the Lotus Arts Festival, and released on Light Records). Ayaan and his brother composed the music score for Academy Award winner Roger Christian's film *"American Daylight"*, and were featured with their father in the Real World Records' album *'Moksha'*. In 2013 Ayaan performed, along with his father and brother, Pierre Thilloy's concerto for sarod, symphonic and electronic orchestra, *Ananta Opus 195*. He also presented his father's Sarod Concerto *Samaagam* with the London Philharmonia Orchestra, and performed for Amjad Ali Khan's Grammy-nominated project *Ancient Sounds*. A recipient of MTV's Lycra Award for the Most Stylish Person in Music, he also received the Keys to the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, along with an Honorary Citizenship and the Bharat Shiromani Award for instrumental music. Ayaan's concert at London's Wigmore Hall along with his father and brother, was released under the *Live at Wigmore Hall* series. Amaan and Ayaan composed two customized special albums: *New Delhi* (2011) and *Raga* (2013) for The Leela Palaces Hotels and Resorts. Along with his many solo classical albums, Ayaan has crossed the bridge between Indian music and a variety of genres, with his electronica and lounge albums *'Reincarnation'*, *'Truth'*, *'Mystic Dunes'*, *'Passion'* and *'Dreamz'*. He also released two albums with his father and guru, titled *"The Music Room"* and *'Sarod Symphony'*. The 2012 album *Rang - Colours of Sufism* presents Amaan and Ayaan's interpretations of traditional Qawwalis on the Sarod, and their 2013 release *Headwaters* - a collaboration with the American hammered dulcimer performer Malcolm Dalglish, features an interplay of ancient voices and images. Two of Amaan and Ayaan's newest releases are the 2016 *Infinite Hope*, in which, together with their father, they collaborate once again with the noted oud virtuoso Rahim AlHaj, and the 2017 CD *Journey - Rabab to Sarod* with the esteemed rabab master Daud Khan Sadozai, a collaboration in which sarod and rabab were recorded together for the first time. Recently Ayaan toured with the Britten Sinfonia, had a residency with his father at Indiana University (they were the first artists residents of the School of Global and International Studies), and performed with his father and brother at the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony and Concert in Oslo, Norway, along with the lineup of Queen Latifa, Steven Tyler and Laura Mvula. Ayaan co-founded with his brother the label Sarod Records which releases their music exclusively on iTunes. Since 2015, sarod virtuosos Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash have joined forces with American violinist Elmira Darvarova to create a unique collaboration, performing compositions by Amjad Ali Khan. The first fruit of this meeting was their recording *SOUL STRINGS*, released in 2015 by Affetto/Naxos, a bridge across which their respective traditions were carried whole and uncompromised. What that first album

suggested subtly, about this daring, supercharged, yet profoundly respectful and even affectionate meeting of musical minds, was brilliantly confirmed by their second CD, *AMALGAM*, a 2016 Affetto/Naxos release, for which the artists were joined by maestro Amjad Ali Khan. The present release *PEACE WORSHIPERS* completes the *Peace Trilogy*, carrying a powerful message through its intensely wrought music language, appealing for peace, tolerance and harmony in a troubled world and environment. More info at ayaanalibangash.com



Photo by Inni Singh

GRAMMY®-nominated recording artist, and a concert violinist since the age of four, **Elmira Darvarova** caused a sensation, becoming the first ever (and so far only) female concertmaster in the history of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. With the MET Orchestra she toured Europe, Japan and the United States, and was heard on the MET's live weekly international radio broadcasts, television broadcasts, CDs and laser discs on the Sony, Deutsche Grammophon and EMI labels. As concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera she has performed with the greatest conductors of our time, including the legendary Carlos Kleiber. She studied with Yfrah Neaman at the Guildhall School in London (on a British Council scholarship), with Josef Gingold at Indiana

University in Bloomington (as one of his assistants), and – privately – with Henryk Szeryng. Elmira Darvarova can be heard on numerous CDs, recorded for several labels (recent releases include the world premiere of Vernon Duke's violin concerto with ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, and a CD with world premiere recordings of music by René de Castéra, released by the French label Azur Classical and named a RECORD OF THE YEAR in 2015 by MusicWeb International). She has appeared in recitals and as soloist on five continents, and has performed concertos with the Moscow State Symphony, the Vienna Radio Symphony and with numerous European and American orchestras. She has performed on the world's most prestigious stages, such as Carnegie Hall, Avery Fischer/ Geffen Hall, Alice Tully Hall and Symphony Space in New York, Symphony Hall in Chicago, Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto, Suntory Hall, Bunka Kaikan and NHK Hall in Tokyo, Musikverein in Vienna, Cadogan Hall in London, Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, Koncerthuset in Stockholm, Victoria Hall in Geneva, Smetana Hall in Prague, Megaron in Athens, Palau de la Musica Catalana in Barcelona, Alte Oper in Frankfurt, Kölner Philharmonie, Mumbai's National Center for Performing Arts, Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall, Saint Petersburg Philharmonia, among many others. She has given recitals and master classes at many festivals worldwide. Well-versed in a lot of genres, she has not only performed opera at the MET, and shared the stage for symphonic and chamber performances with music giants such as James Levine, Janos Starker, Gary Karr, Pascal Rogé, but she has also appeared with tango and jazz legends such as Octavio Brunetti, Fernando Otero and David Amram, and is performing and recording with world-renowned Indian classical musicians - the superstars of the Sarod - maestro Amjad Ali Khan and his sons Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash, with whom she has collaborated since 2014. A documentary film about her life and career was shown on European television. She performs with the New York Piano Quartet, the Delphinium Trio, the Quinteto del Fuego and the Amram Ensemble, and in a duo with the Grammy®-winner, pianist/composer Fernando Otero. Elmira Darvarova is Jury President of several international chamber music competitions in Europe, and she is President and Artistic Director of the New York Chamber Music Festival. Praised by Gramophone Magazine for her "ultra-impassioned performances", and in The STRAD for her "intoxicating tonal beauty and beguilingly sensuous phrasing" and "silky-smooth voluptuous tone", she was featured in a Gramophone Magazine full-page article about her world-premiere recording of Vernon Duke's violin concerto (written for Heifetz in 1940), which she recorded with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra. More info at:

www.elmiradarvarova.com



Photo by Inni Singh

Son of tabla maestro Anindo Chatterjee, **Anubrata Chatterjee** was nurtured from day one to be a tabla player. Mr. Chatterjee made his international debut with a solo performance at the BBC World Radio in the United Kingdom. He has performed in some of the most prestigious festivals in countries including the United States, United Kingdom, Greece, Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Croatia, Indonesia, Germany, France, and the Netherlands. He has represented the Indian government at the Corfu Festival in Greece, the Jerash Festival in Jordan, and the Dubrovnik Festival in Croatia.



Photo by Inni Singh



AMJAD ALI KHAN, Sarod
AMAAN ALI BANGASH, Sarod
AYAAN ALI BANGASH, Sarod
ELMIRA DARVAROVA, Violin



PEACE WORSHIPERS

1. Gentle Sunset 9:55

(Composed by Amjad Ali Khan,
based on *Raga Marwa*)
Amjad Ali Khan - Sarod
Elmira Darvarova - Violin
Anubrata Chatterjee - Tabla

2. Midnight Tenderness 14:32

(Composed by Amjad Ali Khan,
based on *Raga Tilak Kamod*)
Ayaan Ali Bangash - Sarod
Elmira Darvarova - Violin
Anubrata Chatterjee - Tabla

3. Peaceful Morning 13:25

(Composed by Amjad Ali Khan,
based on *Raga Bhairavi*)
Amjad Ali Khan - Sarod
Elmira Darvarova - Violin
Anubrata Chatterjee - Tabla

4. The Brightest of Stars 16:55

(Composed by Amjad Ali Khan,
based on *Raga Durga*)
Amaan Ali Bangash - Sarod
Elmira Darvarova - Violin
Anubrata Chatterjee - Tabla

5. Romantic Ecstasy 4:38

(Composed by Amjad Ali Khan,
based on *Raga Maand*)
Ayaan Ali Bangash - Sarod
Anubrata Chatterjee - Tabla

6. My Burning Tears 7:26

(Composed by Elmira Darvarova, based
on *Grozdanka*, a Bulgarian folk song)
Elmira Darvarova - Violin

7. Enchanted River 6:34

(Composed by Amjad Ali Khan,
based on *Raga Bhatiali*)
Amaan Ali Bangash - Sarod
Anubrata Chatterjee - Tabla

ALL TRACKS ARE WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Producer: John C. Baker

Recorded on October 22, 2016 at RBQ Sound Studios, New Delhi, India
(except for *My Burning Tears*, which was recorded on February 10, 2017 at
Oktaven Audio, Mount Vernon, New York)

Recording and Editing Engineer: Sumit Babbar (except for *My Burning Tears*)

Recording and Editing Engineer for *My Burning Tears*: Ryan Streber

Edited at RBQ Studios, New Delhi, India (except for *My Burning Tears*, which was
edited at Oktaven Audio, Mount Vernon, New York)

Mastering Engineer: Sam Ward, John C. Baker Recordings LLC, Princeton, New Jersey

Liner Notes: George Mathew (except for *My Burning Tears*)

All Photos by Inni Singh

Total time: 73:00

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