

Sanskriti Seniors of WA & Jhankar present

WEST | EAST

marries



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World-renowned collaboration between two musical giants and creators of Sangeet4All, the first Indian Music Curriculum for young learners

Vidushi Saskia Rao-de Haas
disciple of Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia

Pandit Shubhendra Rao
disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar

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WEST EAST marries

'East Marries West' is a world-renowned collaboration between two musical giants accomplished in their own right.

Pandit Shubhendra Rao is "a musical bridge to many cultures." A protégé of Pandit Ravi Shankar, his playing reminds us of the masters of yore re-incarnated into the modern era. Described as "a thinking musician, constantly searching to carry his instrument beyond conventional boundaries", his music is "an experience for the audience that is not aimed at (simply) titillating the senses, but to seize the soul".

Saskia de Haas is a pioneer in the world of music for introducing to it her instrument, the Indian Cello. Speaking about Saskia, her Guru, Flute Maestro Hariprasad Chaurasia, says Saskia is "someone who has been taught by God." According to him, "everybody should listen to her music". She is a recipient of the Pandit Jasraj-Rotary Club Award for Cross-Cultural Understanding.

Together, Shubhendra and Saskia carry Indian music towards new horizons with their strong belief in the unifying power of music. The couple's music is hailed as a new musical language that is both avant-garde and traditional at once with an effect that conjures a symphony orchestra. On stage, their effortless musical communication and improvisation is a joyful experience. Listeners are spellbound by the virtuosity of the duo as well as the energy and freshness that they bring to their performance.

They are accompanied by Ishaan on the piano, and Zuheb Ahmed Khan on the tabla.

Their program 'East Marries West' has been performed at prestigious concert halls, jazz festivals and open-air festivals overseas, including at The John F. Kennedy Centre for Performing Arts in Washington DC, Edinburgh Festivals in Scotland, The National Arts Festival in South Africa, and Musee Guimet in Paris; in India at the Doverlane Music Conference in Kolkata, Baba Harivallabh Sangeet Mahasabha in Jalandhar, Saptak Festival in Ahmedabad, and the Mysore Dusshera Festival; and of course in Australia, at the Sydney Opera House, as the headline act of the Desert Song Festival in Alice Springs, and for the Confluence Festival in 2016.

The New York Times has described their composition "Yathra" as "movingly meditative", while The Edinburgh Press writes, "Together, they form an intriguing duo. A work of outstanding originality... Being and becoming meet in sound and gesture".

Shubhendra was born in Mysore, India, and Saskia in Abcoude, The Netherlands. They married in 2001. They now live in Delhi with Ishaan, their son.

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