

MELA Foundation presents

*In Memoriam Pandit Pran Nath*  
(November 3, 1918 - June 13, 1996)

22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute

*Three Midday Concerts of Raga Vrindabani Sarang*

**The Just Alap Raga Ensemble**

La Monte Young • *voice*

Marian Zazeela • *voice*

Jung Hee Choi • *voice*

Naren Budhkar • *tabla*

The Tamburas of Pandit Pran Nath from the Just Dreams CD

in a setting of

*Abstract #1 from Quadrilateral Phase Angle Traversals*, Marian Zazeela

*Environmental Composition 2017 #1*, Jung Hee Choi

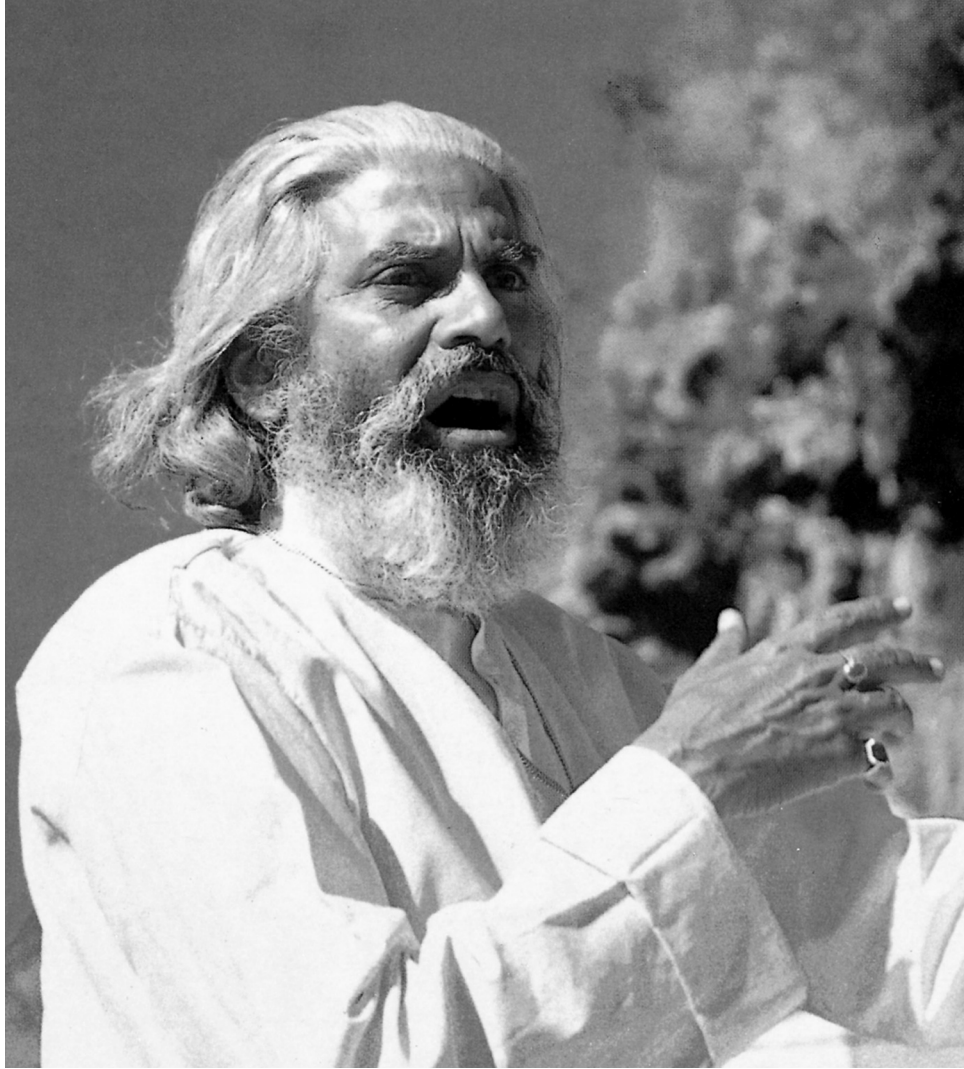
Sundays, July 1, Saturday, July 7 and Sunday, July 15, 2018 • 1:00 pm

**Dream House**  
275 Church Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, New York



**Council on  
the Arts**





Pandit Pran Nath singing *Raga Todi* at Sahastradara, 1972



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## *Three Midday Concerts of Raga Vrindabani Sarang*

At our initiation ceremony as disciples of Pandit Pran Nath, he said as he tied the red band, "If together we can carry the shoes of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib, it is enough."

After Krishna had revealed the splendor of his divinity to Arjuna, Arjuna asked how he could achieve this experience again. Krishna replied:

Very hard to behold is this Form of mine thou hast seen, even the gods are anxious to see this form daily.

Not by Vedas, not by meditation nor by charity and neither by sacrifice can I be seen in such a way as thou hast seen me.

O Arjuna! Only by unswerving devotion I can be known, seen truly and entered in such a manner, O Parantapa (Arjuna).

*Bhagavad Gita* trans. Dr. Shakuntala Rao Sastri, 2nd Ed.,  
(Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1971), Chap. XI, vv. 52-54, pp. 330-331.

Again, in the Adi Purana, Krishna says to Arjuna:

One who sings my name fervently [with love] and dances in my presence, such a person captures me.

One who sings my name fervently [with love and devotion] and sheds tears in my presence, such a person completely possesses me and I am not possessed by anyone except him.

We are reminded of Vishnu's direct pledge to Narada and to all who adore Him in sound:

Neither do I live in Vaikunth, the highest heaven, nor do I live in the hearts of Yogins, but where my devotees sing my name, there I abide.

*Narada Samhita*, I, 7., trans. Sri Karunamayee

These concerts will be recorded live.  
Please refrain from making sound during the performance.

Silence will also be appreciated before and after the concert.

Photographs and recordings are not permitted without  
the written authorization of the artists.

Please observe the traditional Indian custom of not pointing your feet  
towards the performers and the shrine.

We would like to continue the tradition of no applause  
established by Pandit Pran Nath.  
This will keep the mood of the music in the air and in our memories.  
Let us remain in the world of the music, together.

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(November 3, 1918 - June 13, 1996)

**22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute**

*Three Midday Concerts of Raga Vrindabani Sarang*

**Sundays, July 1, Saturday, July 7 and Sunday, July 15, 2018 • 1:00 pm**

**Program**

**Raga Vrindabani Sarang**

**“Kahana Koomwar Alla Beyla” ektal vilampit khayal**

**The Just Alap Raga Ensemble**

La Monte Young • *voice*

Marian Zazeela • *voice*

Jung Hee Choi • *voice*

Naren Budhkar • *tabla*

The Tamburas of Pandit Pran Nath from the Just Dreams CD

Marian Zazeela Jung Hee Choi • *Lighting Design*

La Monte Young Marian Zazeela • *Program Booklet Notes*

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## On My Work in Music Composition and Indian Classical Music

### La Monte Young

Perhaps one of the greatest influences on my work in music composition was the *alap* of North Indian classical music. This unique form, the slow exposition of the pitches of the raga, is totally unmetered, and without counting of any sort. *Alap* was possibly the most significant inspiration for my work with long sustained tones. Pandit Pran Nath used to say, “*Alap* is the essence of raga. When the drut [faster tempo] begins, the raga is finished.”

I consider The Just Alap Raga Ensemble to be one of the most significant creations in the development of my compositional process in that it organically merges the traditions of Western and Hindustani classical musics with the knowledge of acoustical science to embody complementary forms in an encompassing evolutionary statement. With The Just Alap Raga Ensemble, I want to give something back to North Indian classical music in return for its great gift to me. Here, I apply my own compositional approach to traditional raga performance, form and technique: a *pranam* (bow) of gratitude in reciprocation for the influence on my music, since the mid-fifties, of the timeless *alap*, and for one of the most ancient and evolved vocal traditions extant today.

Featuring extended *alap* sections and sustained vocal drones in just intonation over *tamburas*, Marian Zazeela, Jung Hee Choi and I premiered this ensemble on August 22, 2002, nine days after the passing of sarangi master Ustad Hafizullah Khan Sahib, in an invitational memorial tribute concert at the *Dream House*. Ustad Hafizullah Khan was the Khalifa of the Kirana Gharana and the only son of Pandit Pran Nath's teacher, Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib.

The Ensemble performed again on November 3, 2002 for the Pandit Pran Nath 84th Birthday Memorial Tribute, on June 12, 2003 for the Pandit Pran Nath Memorial; on August 9, 2003 on the first anniversary of Khalifaji Hafizullah Khan Sahib's passing; on November 1, 2003 for the Pandit Pran Nath 85<sup>th</sup> Birthday Memorial Tribute; on March 27, 2004, the first concert dedicated to the memory of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib; on July 24, 2004, a Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath and Ustad Hafizullah Khan Sahib; on November 6, 2004 for the Pandit Pran Nath 86<sup>th</sup> Birthday Memorial Tribute; on February 5, 2005, in memory of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib; on October 29 and November 5, 2005 for the Pandit Pran Nath 87<sup>th</sup> Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 17 and 24, 2006 for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath; on January 6 and 13, 2007 in memory of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib; on June 29 and July 6, 2007 for the 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath; on February 8 and 15, 2008 in tribute to Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib and Ustad Hafizullah Khan Sahib; and on June 20 and 27, 2008 for the 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath; on February 1, 2009 at the Yoko Ono Courage Awards; on March 14 and 21, 2009 in tribute to Pandit Pran Nath at the Guggenheim Museum *Dream House* in *The Third Mind* exhibition; on October 28, 2009 for the Merce Cunningham Memorial; on November 13 and 20, 2009 for the Pandit Pran Nath 91<sup>st</sup> Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 12 and 19, 2010 for the 14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath; on November 6 and 13, 2010 for the Pandit Pran Nath 92<sup>nd</sup> Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 11, 18 and 25, 2011 for the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath; on October 29, November 6 and 13, 2011 for the Pandit Pran Nath 93<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Memorial Tribute; on March 19, 24, 31, Villa Elisabeth, MaerzMusik, Berliner Festspiele, April 7, ZKM Karlsruhe, and April 14, Kunst im Regenbogenstadl, Polling, Germany, for the Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tribute Tour 2012; on June 16, 23, and 30, 2012 for the 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Tribute; on November 3, 10 and 17, 2012 for the Pandit Pran Nath 94th Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 1, 8 and 15, 2013 for the 17th Anniversary Memorial Tribute; on October 26, November 2 and 9, 2013 for the Pandit Pran Nath 95th Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 7, 14 and 21, 2014 for the 18th Anniversary Memorial Tribute; on November 1, 8 and 15, 2014 for the Pandit Pran Nath 96th Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 13, 19 and 27, 2015 for the 19th Anniversary Memorial Tribute at *Dia 15 VI 13 545 West 22 Street Dream House*, NYC; on November 6, 14 and 20, 2015 for the Pandit Pran Nath 97th Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 3, 11, 17 and 25, 2016 for the 20th Anniversary Memorial Tribute; on November 4, 12 and 18, 2016 for the Pandit Pran Nath 98th Birthday Memorial Tribute; on June 10, 16 and 24, 2017 for the 21st Anniversary Memorial Tribute to Pandit Pran Nath; on November 3, 10 and 17, 2017 for the Pandit Pran Nath 99th Birthday Memorial Tribute. The most recent concerts were on April 15 and 22 for the Marian Zazeela 78th Birthday Tribute Celebration at 275 Church Street *Dream House*, NYC.

The founding members of The Just Alap Raga Ensemble were La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, and Jung Hee Choi, voices. Brad Catler, tabla, became a member in August 2002. Rose Okada, sarangi, became a member in June 2002. Charles Curtis, cello, became a member in August 2003. Da'ud Constant, voice, became a member in February 2004. Naren Budhkar, tabla, joined the ensemble in June 2004. Jon Catler, fretless sustainer guitar, became a member in September 2006.

In The Hindustan Times (2003), Shanta Serbjeet Singh wrote: “[Young and Zazeela] would create works like the “Just Alap Raga Ensemble” which would amaze musicians of the caliber of Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Jasraj or the Gundecha brothers were they to hear it. In fact I wish they would hear it and savour their own legacy of Indian classical music in two new ways, one, by way of the Youngs' immense *sadhna* and two, by way of the fact that today the great art of Hindustani *Shastriya sangeet* has actually become so much a part of the world of music. Did not the ancients say: *Vasudeva Kumutbhakam*—the world is a family? A work like “The Just Alap Raga Ensemble” actually proves it.”

## The Kirana Style Quotes and Sayings

"*Alap* is the essence of Raga. When the *drut* begins, the Raga is finished." – Pandit Pran Nath

"...the Kirana style...the slowest of all the *gharanas*, according to V. H. Deshpande (1973: 77)."  
as quoted in *Khyāl*, Bonnie Wade, Cambridge University Press, 1984: 198.

It is said that if all of the *gharanas* were placed in a continuous line between two poles with pitch at one pole and rhythm at the other, the Kirana *gharana* would be at the extreme end near the pitch pole. Within the Kirana *gharana*, Pandit Pran Nath and Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan are again at the extreme end nearest the pitch pole.

"...as adherents of the *gharana* say, 'You miss a trifle if you miss *tal*, but if you miss *swara*, you miss all.'"  
(V.H. Deshpande 1973: 42), – *Khyāl*, Bonnie Wade, Cambridge University Press, 1984: 198.

"[on Abdul Wahid Khan] What is said here will sound familiar in terms of Kirana. The most striking aspect of his performance was apparently his *alap*. The time he took, and the care, to elaborate the *raga* was exceptional among *khyal singers*: he might take an hour on one *raga*." (*ibid.*: 211).

According to Pandit Pran Nath, in the later years of his life, Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan stopped singing the *drut tempi*. When queried as to why, he replied, "It does not suit me."

"Abdul Wahid Khan was once asked why he limited himself to only two ragas, Todi and Darbari, which he practiced day in and day out. His response was that he would have dropped the second one also if morning time could last forever. One lifetime, according to him, was not enough to do justice to any raga. He was forced to change from Todi to something else only because of the setting sun and the gathering darkness."  
– *The Kirana Legacy*, Sheila Dhar, International Foundation for Fine Arts, 2000: 13.

When Ustad Salamat Ali Khan was asked by one of his disciples for a description of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan, he replied, "He would begin to improvise in Lahore, and you could travel to Delhi and back, and he would still be improvising. More than that you don't ask."

Ustad Ali Akbar Khan said that when most musicians came to the radio station, they sang their raga and went home. When Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan would come, however, he would sing his scheduled broadcast, and then just continue for 20 hours or so. People would come and go, and he would still be singing.

In all of music, the *tambura* of India occupies a unique position. The *tambura* is perhaps the only instrument that was ever created for the specialized function of producing sustained harmonics.” – *The Tamburas of Pandit Pran Nath* CD Notes, La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela, Just Dreams, (2003: 1)

“...the *tambura* has made an indelible impression on the form of Indian classical vocal raga as we know it today and it has been the principal accompanying instrument for the voice in Indian classical music for a very long time. In fact, the interrelationship of voice and *tambura* in the teachings and performances of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan and Pandit Pran Nath became so inextricable that the *tambura* informs the vocalist’s every nuance and inflection: the tradition of *tambura* accompaniment, *only*, was strictly adhered to. In other *gharānās* (families or styles), however, and even in some branches of the Kirana *gharānā*, the *tambura* sometimes became de-emphasized, often relegated to the point where it is only faintly audible in the background.” (*ibid.* 2)

“*Tamburas* are the instruments that Pandit Pran Nath used almost exclusively to establish the drone that sounds continuously throughout his music. Over this drone, his voice could articulate the pitch nuances of the *ragas* exactly in the classical tradition that had been passed down to him through the Kirana lineage of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan. ...By using *tamburas* without harmonium or *surmandal*, only *Sa* and one or two additional pitches plus the harmonics these pitches generate are sounded in each *tambura*, thus creating a perfectly tuned transparent background over which the singer’s inflections of the *raga* pitches assume an extraordinary definition and clarity. The tonality of the vocal improvisations of the *raga* is heard in reference to this pure harmonic drone.” (*ibid.* 2)

“About the introduction of the harmonium at All India Radio, Pandit Pran Nath once said, ‘Harmonium came in and music went out.’

The use of the standard equal tempered harmonium in an ensemble simply adds insult to injury. While the *surmandal* can at least be tuned to the specific pitches of the *raga*, the harmonium is a fixed-pitch instrument. With a harmonium sounding in the ensemble, not only do the main pitches of the *raga* sustain and clutter the acoustic atmosphere, but even worse, the equal tempered pitches to which it is usually tuned create irrational intervallic ratios that are completely out of tune and therefore can never coincide with the justly intoned pitch relationships that are required to express the meaning and feeling of each *raga* against the harmonic drone of the *tamburas*.

Pandit Pran Nath told us that Ustad Abdul Karim Khan tried to correct this situation by sitting with the harmonium maker and working on the tuning of the reeds. In her book, *Khyāl* (Cambridge University Press, 1984: 35), Bonnie Wade writes: ‘The greatest difficulties with the harmonium are its Western-tempered tuning—a *śruti* [microtonal pitch value] harmonium was developed and was used by Abdul Karim Khan, but it was never widely adopted... .’” (*ibid.* 4)

With the help of Abdul Karim, [Ernest] Clements published his *Introduction to the Study of Indian Music* (1912-13), but when Clements began experimenting with a fixed-*shruti* harmonium Abdul Karim lost sympathy with the project: ‘The shrutis cannot be separated from the swaras which alone remain the unit of our singing. The shrutis cannot be sung independently of the swaras in which they inhere’ “ (Jariwalla 1973: 130). – *Khyāl*, Bonnie Wade, Cambridge University Press, (1984: 190).

“Although one might reasonably expect a Hindustani singer with a pliant voice to cultivate fast-moving passages, the opposite was the case with Abdul Karim. He cultivated elongation of pitches (V. H. Deshpande 1973: 75), taking extreme care about intonation (*ibid.* 41), and creating subtle shades – *kāns* (*ibid.* 75 and Garg 1957: 86). As explained by Deshpande, *kāns* are ‘note particles’ above or below the precise *svara* line, subtler even than *srutis* or microtones, but belonging to the specific region within a pitch. In Deshpande’s opinion, there is a direct relationship between the use of *kāns* and the emotional content of music; they are most likely in prolonged pitches, and as the use of *kāns* decreases the style becomes increasingly oriented to *svara* patterns rather than to *svaras* themselves, and is more intellectually (rather than emotively) appealing. Govindrao Tembe is of the opinion that it was Abdul Karim who started the vogue of such profuse and varied use of *kāns*, at least in Maharashtra (V. H. Deshpande 1973: 75).” (*ibid.* 197).

The *Trio for Strings* (1958) is the first work that I composed which is comprised almost entirely of long sustained tones. It is probably my most important early musical statement. This work has been credited by critics, musicologists and art historians with the initiation of a new direction in music and art, since no one had ever before made a work that was composed completely of sustained tones. There was sustenance in Eastern and Western music but it was always a drone, a pedal point, or a sustained tone of a *cantus firmus* over which melodies were sung or played. It is very difficult to find any other examples of sustenance besides these types of drones in music before they were introduced in the long sustained tones of *for Brass* (1957) and *for Guitar* (1958) and finally crystallized into the *Trio for Strings*. In the *Trio for Strings*, there was no melody as each tone was separated by silence from its preceding and succeeding tones in the same voice. The texture is contrapuntal in that long sustained tones overlap in time. Melody exists only in the sense that one remembers and identifies events that have taken place over long periods of time. The concept of the expanded time structure comprised of long sustained tones and the unique tonal palette of the work came to me not by theoretical deduction but by totally inspired intuition, and subsequently developed into the creation of continuous sound and light environments presented in collaboration with Marian Zazeela in our *Dream Houses*, major installations extending over durations of weeks and years. Thus, the origins of the long sustained tones that came to characterize my style can be traced to *for Brass*, *for Guitar* and the *Trio for Strings*.

...The use of sustenance became one of the basic principles of my work. When there are long sustained tones, it is possible to better isolate and listen to the harmonics. The harmonics can assume a greater relevance to the fundamental musical material, allowing greater opportunity to work with them and to produce other tones that are related to them. The harmonic series is a clearly audible model for understanding the structure of "just intonation." Just intonation is that system of tuning based on the natural principles of overtones and resonances as our ears hear them and our voices produce them, that is, as they are found in nature. [I formally define just intonation as follows: Just intonation is that system of tuning in which every frequency is related to every other frequency as the numerator or denominator of some whole number fraction.] The tunings for *The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys* (1964-present) and *The Well-Tuned Piano* (1964-present) were set in the system of just intonation. Additionally, sustained tones help make it possible to achieve finer degrees of precision in tuning. In my book, *Selected Writings* (Munich, 1969), I point out that tuning is a function of time. If scientists want to make a comparative measurement of two or more periodic events in time, the longer the period of measurement, the more information they can extract about the relationships between the events in time. This is exactly what happens in tuning; whether the frequency is measured with a frequency counter, an oscilloscope, or by ear, the degree of precision possible will always be proportional to the duration of the analysis, i.e., to the duration of the tuning. For instance, the drone is like a frequency constant, and if a drone is sustained throughout the composition, there can be very fine tuning relationships because there is a constant, a point of reference to which one can always return, as with the drone in Indian classical music. The Indian system of scales is the most all-inclusive set of scales in the world today. The parent scales of perhaps all the scales and modes that have been used in Western and Eastern music can be found in Indian music. It is probable that such a large number of scales evolved through the context of working with the drone.

...sustenance provided the foundation for the development of my musical expression and, ultimately, became the light that illuminated the path that led to my later work in tuning and just intonation, inspiring a new vision of composition evolving from the universal truths of harmonic structure.

—La Monte Young, *Trio for Strings* Program Notes 1987-2002.

The parallels between the Kirana style, especially the music of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan, Ustad Abdul Karim Khan and Pandit Pran Nath, and my music with long sustained tones, the focus on one work over long periods of time, and just intonation, are remarkable—a set of shared concerns that seemingly evolved independently but actually derived from a common source of higher inspiration and resulted in a merging of East and West that now continues with informed awareness. I quote from the text of my composition, "Raga Sundara": *Anahata Nada. Raga Ahata* (the inaudible vibrations of universal structure become audibly manifest through Raga). — La Monte Young.

## Raga

A raga is a set of musical elements including a modal scale; characteristic ascending and descending versions of the scale; characteristic melodic phrases, motifs and cadential patterns; characteristic predominant (sonant) and sub-dominant (con-sonant) pitches called *vadi* and *samvadi* that are frequently different from the tonic (*sa = do*) and dominant (*pa = sol*) or sub-dominant (*ma = fa*) or natural seventh degree (*shudh ni = ti*) pitches in the *tambura* drone; characteristic ornaments; conventional pitches for beginning and ending phrases; special *shrutis* (microtonal pitch values); and *surkans*, described by Deshpande as “subtle shades—‘note particles’ above or below the precise *svara* [pitch] line, subtler even than *srutis* or microtones, but belonging to the specific region within a pitch.” (V. H. Deshpande 1973: 75) The performers improvise with these elements.

## Raga Performance

Raga is very much involved with seasons, times of day and night, and geography, as well as the atmosphere and mood of a particular occasion. In order to allow for the greatest interplay of these elements and in keeping with the highest standards of presentation, Pandit Pran Nath did not predetermine which ragas he would sing, but, rather allowed his inspiration to guide him at the moment he sat down and checked the tuning of the *tamburas*; accordingly, the names of the ragas were not listed in the programs. Although Pandit Pran Nath on several occasions in mid-performance broke into an inspired description of a particularly striking aspect of a raga or one of the compositions, he did not announce the names of ragas before performances as he felt that speech before music spoiled the mood and was better left for the classroom atmosphere. For those who wished to know the name of a raga performed, the ushers were given this information after the concert.

Inasmuch as the Kirana style stems from the great *drupad* singer Gopal Nayak, Pandit Pran Nath's repertoire included material in both the *drupad* and *khayal* forms. His rendition of a raga could consist of any of the following sections:

- 1) An introductory or exposition section of the *alap*, without a rhythmic cycle or *tabla* accompaniment. In *drupad* form, this section may consist of permutations and combinations of the sequence of the syllables from a line of *Vedic* text. This is known as *nom tom* style. In *khayal* form, this section may also be sung in *ahkar* (on the syllable "ah"), in which case it is known as *avahan*.
- 2) The introductory *alap* section may be followed by one or more sections in which a fixed composition is sung and improvised upon by the performer demonstrating the shape and nuances of the raga pitches throughout. In vocal music, compositions are poetic texts set to a fixed melody created from the pitches of the raga in a particular rhythmic cycle:
  - a) The first composition is frequently a long continuation of the *alap* section known as *vilampit* in which the *tabla* maintains a slow extended rhythmic cycle, often of 12 beats (*ektal*) or 14 beats (*jhumra*).
  - b) Certain compositions are performed in a medium tempo, known as *madhyalaya*.
  - c) The final composition may be performed at a faster tempo. This section is known as *drut*.

The inclusion of the above sections is dependent on the singer's mood and the nature of the raga. A closing raga may sometimes include only one section, in *madhyalay* or *vilampit* tempo. The compositions may be traditional, handed down as precious heirlooms from guru to disciple within each *gharana* (school), or works composed by the singer. Pandit Pran Nath inherited a wealth of rare traditional compositions and also composed many himself, which he sometimes included in concert presentations. The words of compositions may be in *Sanskrit*, *Urdu*, *Hindi*, or often a language known as *Brijbasi*, which was specially developed for musical texts. Certain compositions known as *Taranas* are made up of permutations and combinations of the sequence of syllables from a Sufi prayer attributed to the great Khwaja Amir Khusru, the court musician of King Allauddin Khilji. In *khayal* form, most compositions are set in two parts. The first part is called the *'sthayi*, and generally includes pitches below middle *sa* down to *pa* or *ma*, and pitches above middle *sa* up to *ma* or *pa*. The second part is called the *antara*, and usually includes the pitches from the upper tetrachord above middle *sa* to upper *sa* and above. The *antara* expresses the inner feeling of the raga and is usually sung only once or twice, and by some musicians, not at all. Often the singer may include improvised passages sung in *sargam* (solfege), *ahkar* (ah), or using the words of the composition.

## Raga Vrindabani Sarang

*Raga Vrindabani Sarang* is a midday raga and is to be sung while the sun is high in the sky. Usually it will be sung between 11 am and 3 pm. According to one account this raga was created by Swami Haridas. The mood of *Raga Vrindabani Sarang* expresses the longing of Radha for Krishna. Radha and Krishna were childhood lovers. They herded cows in Vrindaban and *Sarang* refers to Radha as a deer. *Raga Vrindabani Sarang* uses 6 pitches, which include sa, re, ma, pa, komal ni (flat seventh degree) and shudh ni (natural seventh degree). Komal ni can only descend, and shudh ni can both ascend and descend.

The Braj Bhāshā text of *Kahana Koomwar Alla Beyla* and the English translation is as follows:

'Stayi	First part
Kahana koomwar alla beyla	Young Krishna, the uniquely charming lad
Aisa chale karat chela chabila	His mere walk is so flamboyant. We marvel at his gait: such is his dandiness and flamboyance.

(Translation: Naren Budhkar)

### Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan, Pandit Pran Nath and The Kirana Style

Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan was the acknowledged master of Kirana style during his time. His revival of the *khayal* at the turn of the century stands, in itself, as a virtually unparalleled contribution in the recent history of Indian classical music. Although a youthful prodigy of the Kolhapur court, remaining unchallenged after his public debut there at the age of 18, he did not have the inclination to spend time singing in the courts. Instead, he lived a devout, reclusive life, singing in the presence of holy men and at the tombs of Sufi saints, and only occasionally sang in public. His command of the art was of such stature that no other musician ever performed in his presence. Requiring rigorous discipline and fierce devotion, he took very few disciples; among them Pran Nath became the most important through his ceaseless practice, natural talent, and extraordinary ability to serve his teacher.

Abdul Wahid Khan, along with his celebrated contemporary, the late Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, made Kirana style the most influential and popular in India today, yet only a handful of musicians can claim to have studied with Abdul Wahid Khan directly. It is through Pandit Pran Nath that Kirana style in its purest and most knowledgeable form has been preserved until the present time.

The musical tradition known as the Kirana style or *gharana* is named for the small village of Kirana, about 55 miles north of Delhi, where the musicians lived who gave it its characteristics and individuality. Pandit Pran Nath traced Kirana style directly from Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib's teacher, Ustad Haider Baksh Khan Sahib, a disciple of the renowned and unrivalled master of the vina and voice, Mian Bande Ali Khan Sahib, through the legendary singer and saint, Gopal Nayak, and on back into time.

Gopal Nayak, who lived about seven hundred years ago in the city of Devgiri, was a drupad singer of the Govarhari Bani (style), also known as Krishna Bani, or the style of Krishna. Devgiri was the capital of the Yadava dynasty. When King Allauddin Khilji took Devgiri in 1293, his court musician Khwaja Amir Khusru advised him that Gopal Nayak was the most valuable treasure of that realm and that they should take him to Delhi as part of the ransom for lifting the siege of the citadel. Gopal Nayak was a worshipper of Lord Krishna, but in Delhi he came to be impressed by the Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti and his disciple Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia, and embraced Islam as well. Infused with the magical notes of Krishna's flute, and the Chishti Sufis' adoration of music, the Kirana *gharana* has always been more than a distinct musical tradition; it is a spiritual form preserved and expressed in the language of music.

It is said that the musical genius of Gopal Nayak was of such divine inspiration that even Amir Khusru became his disciple. Eventually, Gopal Nayak settled in the nearby village of Kirana. Two of his disciples, the brothers Nayak Dhondu and Nayak Bhannu, belonged to Kirana and have been credited with establishing the Kirana school of Indian music under that name.

N. K. Vasistha elucidated the Kirana lineage in "The Kirana Gharawana" program booklet published for the inauguration concerts of the Kirana Society of Music, New Delhi (18-19 November 1966: 13-16).

Out of this background emerged an unending stream of the classical singers and instrumentalists who put Kirana in an enviable place on the musical map of India by virtue of their distinct and unique singing style. It is they who brought the exposition of the Dhrupad to the Khayal singing in all its original purity, structural intricacy, imaginative quality and aesthetic beauty. The magnitude of their contribution is further revealed by the wordings of many khayals that were composed by Hingarang and Bhanginipiya, two Kirana singers of the Mughal days. Members of this Gharana applied their talent and energies mainly to three fields--Vocal, Bin and Sarangi...

Nayak Dhondu and Nayak Bhannu were under the royal wings of Raja Man Singh (1486-1526 A.D.) of the Tomar dynasty. Nayak Dhondu's great grandsons--Rahim Ali and Hussain Khan--were the contemporaries of the great Binkars, Adarang and Sadarang. All these four musicians were together in the Royal Court of Delhi (1719-1748 A.D.). Rahim Ali had two sons--Shahab Khan and Vilayat Ali. Shahab Ali and his son Nanhe Khan were court musicians in the Bidar state (Hyderabad Deccan) in the middle of the nineteenth century. Later on Rahim Baksh, the son of Nanhe Khan, was a court singer during the reigns of Mahboob Ali and Usman Ali--rulers of Hyderabad. The noted vocalist and Sarangi player Haider Baksh Khan, who enjoyed patronage of the Mysore and Kolhapur states, was the son-in-law of Nanhe Khan. He was a prodigious musical genius. Though he had mastered a large number of ragas, his rendering of Multani, Lalit, Darbari Kanra and Bihag was exceptionally immaculate and almost matchless. With great love and care he trained Rajab Ali Khan, Gulab Bai of Dewas and his own nephew Abdul Wahid Khan. They were all great exponents of the Kirana gayaki but the name of Abdul Wahid Khan deserves a special mention. He led a life of high seriousness and dedication to his art. His profound and unassailable knowledge of the subject made him a great musical celebrity in his brief lifetime. His favourite ragas were Ramkali, Pradip, Multani, Darbari Kanra, Puriya Kalyan, Mian ki Malhar, Lalit, Puriya, Mian ki Todi and Bhairava...

Foremost among the disciples of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan are Suresh Babu, Hirabai Barodekar, Saraswati Rane, Pt. Jeewan Lal Mattoo, Munni Bai, Shakoor Khan, Feroze Nizame, Begam Akhtar, Bashir Khan, Pran Nath and the popular playback singer Mohammed Rafi...

The other Kirana branch of Nayak Bhannu, brother of Nayak Dhondu, has also produced equally famed artistes like Surgyan Khan, Dhela Rang, Ganpat and two brothers Alla Rakha and Barkhurdar Khan. Three musicians of the Syed Gharana--Mir Khan, Nazar Khan and Ahmad Khan--joined the Kirana Gharana for being trained as Binkars. Nirmu Shah who belonged to this family came to be known as the "Fakir" musician. Of the two brothers, Alla Rakha was a highly talented Binkar, while his brother Barkhurdar Khan was a veteran vocalist. Both were musicians in the court of Lucknow during the realms of Asaf-ud-daula and Mohamaddaula about 1700 A.D. Later on this family received favour from the Gwalior Court during the period of Daulatrao Scindia.

Alla Rakha had three sons--Sabras, Sadig Ali and Ghulam Maule. One of the greatest Binkars of all times, Bande Ali Khan, who was the son of Sadiq Ali, had mastered almost all the known ragas. His playing of Mian ki Todi, Asavari, Puriya, Yaman, and Malkos used to transport his audience to an ethereal plane. Of his many students, the princely brothers--Balwant Rao (Binkar) and Bhayya Ganpot Rao (Harmonium player) stand out. They were wizards with their instruments. Murad Khan, Wahid Khan of Indore, Ahmad Khan, Hassan Khan, Chunni Bai of Indore and Chandrabhag Bai of Bhavanager were also his pupils.

It is important to note here that certain disciples achieved special roles in relation to their teachers that permitted them to attain greater knowledge of the tradition.

Although greatly sought after, Mian Bande Ali Khan Sahib lived and practiced in holy places and shrines, remaining aloof from the courts and other musicians. Such was his devotion that he practiced at the Durgah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer for twenty-four years and every morning swept the floor with his own long hair.

In *The Life of Music in North India*, Daniel Neuman writes:

Many anecdotes are related about musicians in the past who are considered saintly in some way. These stories serve to demonstrate the power of a spiritual force in the formation of a particular musician's genius. This saintliness is the element beyond *riaz* and the guru-shishya [guru-disciple] tradition, which sets apart exceptional figures of the past, and—rarely—a few ancient musicians of the present. A good example of it is found in the story about Ustad Bande Ali Khan, a great bin player, who is described as a very saintly person. It is said that he

used to play his bin next to a holy man who never acknowledged his presence. The Ustad would come every day, but still there would be no response. This went on for fourteen years. One day while he was playing, the sound of his music sent the holy man into a meditative state. After this he told Bande Ali Khan to leave, as he was finally ready and, wherever he played, people would honor him for his music. (Daniel M. Neuman, Wayne State University Press. 1980: 63)

Mian Bande Ali Khan's relatives, all Kirana family musicians, sent their sons and nephews to him in the final stages of their studies to perfect their knowledge of the finest nuances of Raga. It is a characteristic of the Kirana tradition for the guru to make it as hard as possible for the disciples in order that only the most serious will remain. One by one, Mian Bande Ali Khan sent most of them back to their homes. Haider Baksh Khan became the one who was allowed to stay. The story is told of how Bande Ali Khan would travel in a bullock cart with his vina, while Haider Baksh Khan followed on foot, running for water and preparing his master's hookah, without stopping the cart. Ustad Haider Baksh Khan Sahib then was able to take benefit of both branches of the Kirana Gharana: from Nayak Dhondhu as the son-in-law of Nanhe Khan, and from Nayak Bhannu as the disciple of Mian Bande Ali Khan.

During the period that Haider Baksh Khan was under the patronage of the Maharaja at Kolhapur, the court was keeping many outstanding musicians. Haider Baksh took his sister's son, Abdul Wahid Khan, when a boy of six, with him to the court to train him to become "the only one." Although he trained his nephew with great love and care, the rod was not spared, and for the rest of his life Abdul Wahid Khan's back bore the scars of where his guru had beaten him with an iron bar.

At the age of 18, Abdul Wahid Khan made his formal public debut in the court, and all of the court musicians were present. After the performance, Haider Baksh Khan extended the invitation to any musician from near or far to challenge his young protégé: "If anyone understands this, or can do it, come forward to the *tamburas*." But all remained silent from that time on.

It is said by musicians that Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib was a musician of such stature that he contributed something to Indian music that had never existed before. Among his contributions, he developed a very slow *vilampit* style, which proceeded at a much slower tempo than other musicians had used. His style of executing the *vilampit* section was of such profundity that it even went beyond the solemnity and majesty of Drupad. His approach to the *vilampit*, combined with his vast knowledge of raga, and his unimaginable ability to improvise endlessly, were among the jewels he set within the Khayal form to restore its classical grandeur, and perhaps to have illuminated it more brilliantly than anything that had appeared before.

Before the release of the restored recordings of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan, it was possible to catch a glimpse of the position he commanded by listening to the records of his illustrious colleague Ustad Abdul Karim Khan. Abdul Karim Khan was the star performer of the Kirana Gharana. He traveled throughout India appearing in the courts of great Maharajas, and was in such great demand that he was lighting his cigarettes with signed blank checks for concert invitations that he did not want to accept. Upon listening to Abdul Karim Khan one realizes that he is one of the greatest performers to have ever been heard on record. He yielded to Abdul Wahid Khan, however. On the historical occasion when they sang together in public in Kolkata it is said that Abdul Wahid Khan was on top of him like an eagle. Ustad Mashkoor Ali Khan tells that Abdul Wahid Khan gave Abdul Karim Khan over 300 *'stayis* in the Green Room.

It is indicative of Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib's incomparable mastery that when Abdul Karim Khan's daughter, Hirabai Barodekar, asked her father to teach her he first required that she become his disciple, and then straightaway required her to become the disciple of Abdul Wahid Khan. Abdul Karim Khan's son and disciple, Sureshbabu Mane, was also the disciple of Abdul Wahid Khan.

In *The Voice of the Sarangi*, Joep Bor provides memories of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan from a personal interview with sarangi maestro Pandit Ram Narayan (Quarterly Journal, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Bombay. 1987: 151):

Abdul Wahid Khan was a very sober, disciplined and religious man, and was basically against teaching and performing in public. One had to surrender completely to learn from him. In the end he taught me four ragas: Yaman, Bhairav, Purya and Patdip, and whenever I had to broadcast a particular raga, he would tell me to write down the chalan and develop the raga on these lines. And it worked! He would say, "If you know how to move up and down in the scale of a raga, and stay within that range, nothing can go wrong." He was a truly great master.



Some people who heard Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib said that he was the greatest musician who ever lived. But because he appeared so rarely in public, not too many people heard him. He did not permit anyone to record him until near the end of his life. Abdul Wahid Khan was not well at the time, but the director of the radio station pleaded with him to leave something for posterity, and he finally consented to three short recordings of Pat Dip, Multani, and Darbari, which remained in the archives of All India Radio, New Delhi. Due to the state of the art of recording equipment of the time, and also because of his health, a commercial record could not be made of these until sometime in the mid-'70s, when they were finally processed and released by EMI on a Great Masters Great Music series album. An even greater event was the discovery of a one-hour recording of Raga Darbari that had somehow been recorded by All India Radio Bombay, possibly without the master's knowledge. We heard the tape in 1974 and some years later it was also processed and made available in a limited edition. Upon hearing this recording, it was easy to understand why some thought he was the greatest musician who ever lived. Certainly, nothing comparable to Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan's performance of the one-hour Raga Darbari has ever been recorded before or since.

Pandit Pran Nath remembered his teacher as a saint, totally absorbed in singing as the highest form of communion: the front of his shirvani wet with tears as the spirits of the ragas again and again unfolded the uncountably haunting beauty of their timeless divinity. Although invited many times, Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan never remained in the courts for long periods, as he could not find it in his nature to be constantly bowing to the Maharajas for favors when he felt that God had given him such a great gift. Instead he preferred to sing in the presence of his spiritual *pir* (master), the Sufi saint Sayed Khwaja Ali Ahmed Nafir Alam who lived in Multan. Abdul Wahid Khan implored his *pir* many times to come to Lahore so he could serve him more continuously, and finally Sayed Nafir Alam promised him, saying, "You make a place for me and I will come there." Abdul Wahid Khan used his entire life's savings to build a mosque for his *pir* in Lahore. Meanwhile Khwaja Nafir Alam died and was buried in Multan. When he learned this Wahid Khan traveled to Multan and went to the tomb crying, "You promised me!" and lifted the body himself and brought it to the Durgah he had made in Lahore. For the remainder of the time that he lived in Lahore, Abdul Wahid Khan sang mainly at this tomb, absorbed in the strong vibrations of the soul of his departed *pir*.

Pran Nath liked to compare his Ustad's way of life to that of Swami Haridas, the guru of Tansen. Mian Tansen was designated one of "The Nine Gems" in the court of Akbar the Great, Emperor of India, and became the most celebrated singer of modern times. Swami Haridas, on the other hand, was an ascetic who spent his entire life in a remote jungle hut. He was such an exalted saint that one night an ancient murti (statue) of Lord Krishna came to him in a dream and described where it could be found buried in a particular spot near the bank of the Jumna. The very next morning Swami Haridas went to that exact place and dug up the murti, a resplendent figure that had been caused to disappear hundreds of years before because its jeweled eyes were of such dazzling brilliance that mortals could not gaze upon them for any length of time. Therefore, a temple was constructed on that site in Vrindaban where, until this day, the murti is hidden from public view and unveiled periodically for only a few seconds at a time.

Such was Akbar's love for music that in his palace at Fatehpur Sikri, he built a special chamber, called Khwabgah, or "House of Dreams." This room was situated above, and with a full view of the singing platform, which was surrounded by a moat of water in an auspicious section of the courtyard. From this "Dream Room" he and his queens could listen to Tansen and other great musicians of the time in a secluded atmosphere.

The tradition of Akbar's great love for music was continued by his son Jahanghir. In addition to keeping many musicians in his court Jahanghir commissioned two gigantic *tamburas* twelve feet long, with wooden gourds larger than a man could put his arm around, and he had these played continuously at night so that he could fall asleep while listening to their sound.

Pandit Pran Nath told us this version of a very famous story:

One day, transported after listening to Tansen sing, Akbar exclaimed to him that he must be the greatest musician in the world. Tansen demurred, saying that, in fact, he was nothing in front of his guru. When Akbar then queried as to in whose court his teacher was employed, Tansen replied that his teacher sang in the court of the King of Kings. Akbar was tantalized and asked how he could hear this great musician, but Tansen declared that it would not be possible as Swami Haridas sang *only* for his Master. Nonetheless, Akbar implored Tansen, and together they conceived the plan whereby Akbar would carry the *tambura* as though he were Tansen's disciple, in hopes that Swami Haridas would grant him an audience. Thus, they set off for the jungle hut of Swami Haridas. Swami Haridas was not only a great musician, he was a saint with extraordinary visionary powers. Thus, as they were

traveling, Swami Haridas understood their plan and thought to himself that this was most unfitting for the King of India to be coming to the hut of a holy man, like a thief in the night.

Sometime after they had arrived, Tansen asked his teacher if he would sing something, but Swami Haridas declined, saying that he was not in the mood just then. A bit later, Tansen began to sing a *raga*, and intentionally made a mistake. Immediately, his guru silenced him with the admonishment that singing in the court was ruining him. Then Swami Haridas sang the *raga* himself and at last, Akbar understood the meaning of Tansen's words.

Hazrat Inayat Khan tells a slightly different version of the story in which Swami Haridas was impressed with the fact that Akbar humbled himself to be Tansen's servant and sang for the Emperor:

"And his singing was great; it was a psychic phenomenon and nothing else. It seemed as if all of the trees and plants of the forest were vibrating; it was a song of the universe. The deep impression made upon Akbar and Tansen was more than they could stand; they went into a state of trance, of rest, of peace. And while they were in that state, the Master left the cave. When they opened their eyes, he was not there. The Emperor said, "O, what a strange phenomenon! But where has the Master gone?" Tansen said, "You will never see him in this cave again, for once a man has got a taste of this, he will pursue it, even if it costs him his life. It is greater than anything in life." (*The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan, Volume II, Music*, Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1960, p. 137-138)

When Pran Nath, as a boy of thirteen, first heard Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan, he felt that at last he had found the true music. Whereas hearing all the other musicians had merely made him continue his search, the music of Abdul Wahid Khan was clearly the reason he had left his home. He felt this music reached his very soul, and from then on he made every effort to remain nearby his idol. But, while Abdul Wahid Khan was a saintly man, he was also a strict disciplinarian. To remain with him for any length of time was literally like being in a cage with a lion. Therefore, most of the disciples came for their lessons and left soon after.

In a review of Pandit Pran Nath's performance in Journal #3 of The 8th Iran Festival of the Arts, Shiraz, (1974) Peter L. Wilson wrote:

It is said of Alauddin Ahmed Sabir Chishti, one of the five great masters of the Chishti Sufi Order of Northern India, that late in his life he would allow only one human being to come near him: a musician. So fierce was Sabir's personality, so overwhelming the aura about him that the musician had to sit some fifty feet away from the saint, and face in the other direction while he played and sang.

From that one disciple descend the present day Sabiri Chishtis, and their devotion to music continues as well. When I attended the annual 'urs (death anniversary) last year at Kalyar Shariff, I heard a great deal of devotional singing. I also saw men the like of which I never witnessed before in India: powerful men with faces like hawks, with an aspect of intense asceticism, all dressed as if they had stepped out of a Moghul miniature: one of the purest experiences I have ever had of the continuity of Tradition. Each of these men seemed to be a reflection of the saint who was buried there: austere, mysterious, almost forbidding.

I say all this because Pandit Pran Nath's master was a Sabiri Chishti, and as I listened to him sing at the Hafezieh on Friday night I was transported in my imagination back to that parched clearing in the forest; Pran Nath's music is the sonic equivalent of the ambiance which surrounds that strange tomb.

That Pran Nath is a Hindu should surprise no one familiar with Indian religion or music, for India is the land that lives (or used to live) the doctrine of the Transcendent Unity of Religion. Kirana style, like other styles of Northern Indian music, is the child of an alchemical marriage of two cultures, each rooted in a divine revelation, each expressing itself in an exalted scientia of sound.

Abdul Wahid Khan had long been a devotee of the shrine of Sheik Sabir, and every year at 'urs he made the pilgrimage to Kalyar Shariff to sing and worship there. After the partition of India and Pakistan, Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan was living in Kirana and could no longer make the pilgrimage to Lahore (Pakistan) to sing at the Durgah he had built for his *pir*, Khwaja Nafir Alam. Therefore, it was at this very Durgah of Sabir Chishti that he sang in the last years of his life. From the severe figure of this great Chishti saint something of the spartan rigor with which Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan trained his students can be understood.

For Pran Nath, however, being near his master was the fulfillment of his dreams, and even the unsparing punctiliousness of Abdul Wahid Khan could not deter him. Thus, he was able to persist in learning to serve so assiduously that his guru kept him by his side. For almost twenty years he attended his Ustad like a household servant, performing whatever menial tasks were required, all the while listening and observing and keeping his attention fixed on his teacher, waiting for the rare moments when he would be told to bring the *tambura* and have a lesson. His devotion was such that he sensed whatever Abdul Wahid Khan wanted at any moment and brought it for him even before he asked.

In *Khyāl*, Bonnie Wade gives a striking example of the rigor of Pandit Pran Nath's studies with Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan in Lahore: "A devoted disciple, Pran Nath lived with Abdul Wahid and served him in the traditional *gurukula* manner, helping with kitchen duties, giving him massages, and so on. Once when Abdul Wahid was sitting on a *charpai* preparing his *hookah*, moving the coals with iron tongs, Pran Nath was at his feet playing *tambura* and singing. When the disciple made a mistake, the *ustad* pulled his earlobe with the hot tongs. Pran Nath dismisses those acts of discipline with understanding and remembers his *Ustad* with warmth, respect, and gratitude. Their *guru-sisya* relationship was a long and sincere one, and Pran Nath is lauded by other musicians, including Hirabai Barodekar (in 1978), for having set a good example in the traditional manner." (*Op. cit.* 196)

In order not to disturb the master's fine sensibility for pitches developed over a lifetime, the student was not permitted to sing in the presence of the guru. Consequently, Pran Nath would practice all night in the nearby jungles while Abdul Wahid Khan slept, returning before dawn in time to prepare tea and have it ready when his master arose. As it was not customary for the student to rest or recline while the guru was awake, Pran Nath has said that during all those years he learned to live virtually without sleep; it was a choice between sleep and practice, and he chose practice. Finally, after eight years of this devoted service, Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan acknowledged the seriousness of Pran Nath's intent and accepted him as a disciple.

The renowned tabla master, Ustad Thirakwa Khan Sahib, was a close friend of Abdul Wahid Khan. On one of his visits he said to the young Pran Nath, "You are a disciple of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan?" Pran Nath replied proudly, "I am a slave of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib!" Thirakwa Khan was impressed and said that this was good, and due to this approach Pran Nath would have his master's music.

After becoming a disciple Pran Nath continued to serve his master until his death twelve years later in 1950. In his late twenties, Pran Nath took up the hermetic existence of a naked, singing devotee, or *naga*. Then for about five years, whenever he was not serving his guru, he remained in a remote Shaivite cave-temple in Tapkeshwar, his body covered with ash, singing only for God. Sometime before Abdul Wahid Khan's death, however, he requested that Pran Nath give up the ascetic path and go back into the world, marry and become a house-holder, give concerts, sing on the radio, and teach his music. This was very hard for Pran Nath to do, though, as his own true musical feeling was in the more reclusive spiritual direction. But in the guru-disciple tradition, however, the guru has a last request, called *guru dukshana*, at the end of the student's discipleship, and both master and disciple must have realized that it was essential for the preservation of Kirana style that Pran Nath take it into the world.

Kirana style has always been recognized for its extensive knowledge of raga. Nayak was a title bestowed upon persons who were masters of both the theory and practice of music. In all, there were twelve such old time Nayaks referred to in music histories, including Amir Khusru. Among the twelve, Nayaks Gopal, Dhondu and Bhannu represented the Kirana style.

In the Kirana *gharana* the *alap* section of the raga is considered to be of highest importance. In this slow introductory section all of the characteristic scale structures, melodic patterns and cadences, *vadi/samvadi* (dominant/subdominant) relationships, *shruti* tunings, microtonal shadings and *gamaks* (ornaments) are exposed. Knowledge of raga actually means knowledge of *alap*, because all of the subsequent developments unfolded in the raga, such as compositions and improvisations, are based on the musical elements set forth in the *alap*. Pandit Pran Nath often said that the raga is created in between the tones. For instance, if we consider two different ragas, both of which use the same scale structure, we will find that they invariably have a different set of the above characteristic elements in order to create the differences between the moods of the ragas. This differentiation among ragas, preserving the essential spirit and meaning of individual ragas, has been elucidated to an exceptional degree in the Kirana tradition.

When we consider that there are many hundreds of ragas, the significance of the fact that Mian Bande Ali Khan Sahib had mastered almost all the known ragas takes on cosmological dimensions. Pandit Pran Nath used to say, "Three

lifetimes are very less for doing this work. It is necessary to remain one hundred years with the guru, then practice for one hundred years, and then you can sing for one hundred years!"

It is well known that if a raga is correctly rendered it will create its own distinct mood or psychological state in the listener. In order to invoke the spirit of the raga that in turn creates the mood in the listener, the raga must be performed during the particular season of the year and hour of the day or night that are appropriate for it. The system of Indian music is many thousands of years old; it was created by the ancient sages of India during epochs when man lived much closer to nature than is possible or even conceivable in modern times. These seer-musicians were attuned to the multifarious sensations Nature herself induces as the days move from dawn to dusk to night, from season to season. Thus there are many ragas, and each one was created by the *rishis* in response to a certain time, a particular feeling. In this lies the richness and subtlety of this great art, and to appreciate it one must hear each raga in its own time. For this reason Pandit Pran Nath endeavored over the years to present entire concert series devoted to ragas of the morning, afternoon and evening, so that listeners in the West could begin to build a vocabulary for understanding the actual meaning of this art form, rather than merely experience it as an exotic type of entertainment.

While a number of disciples of Abdul Wahid Khan became outstanding musicians, it is significant that at his funeral all of his disciples and members of the family were present, and the master's *tambura* was placed in the hands of Pran Nath to sing the last ceremonial offering for their departed Ustad.

### **Pandit Pran Nath**

Born to a cultured family in Lahore, Pran Nath grew up in an atmosphere of live performances of the masters of traditional vocal music. Illustrious musicians were invited by his grandfather to perform at their family home every evening. He was singing by the age of six and before long decided, against his mother's wishes, to devote his life to music. He left home at age thirteen and studied for twenty years as a disciple of Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan, the foremost master of the Kirana *gharana*, which descends from Gopal Nayak (ca. 1300), and is also known as the style of Krishna. Pran Nath's performances on All India Radio since 1937 and at Music Conferences throughout India established his reputation as a leading interpreter of Kirana style with an exceptional knowledge of traditional compositions and the delineation of *raga*.

His uncompromising adherence to the authentic rendering of the traditional *ragas* and his unwillingness to change his style to meet modern tastes for rhythmic and popular elements contributed to his reputation as a "musician's musician" credited with a voluminous knowledge of hundreds of *ragas* and several times as many compositions. Many well-known professional singers, including Nazakat and Salamat Ali Khan and Bhimsen Joshi, came to him to perfect their understanding of particular *ragas*. From 1960 through 1970 he taught the advanced classes in Hindustani vocal music at Delhi University.

Pandit Pran Nath's first appearance in the West in 1970 essentially introduced the vocal tradition of Hindustani classical music to the U.S. He performed hundreds of concerts throughout America, as well as in Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, Iran and France, becoming the most influential exponent of the Kirana style. His 1971 morning performance at Town Hall, New York City was the first concert of Morning *Ragas* to be presented in the U.S. Subsequently, he introduced and elaborated to Western audiences the concept of performing *ragas* at the proper time of day by scheduling entire series of concerts at special hours. Many students and professional musicians came to him in America to learn about the vast system of *raga* and to improve their musicianship.

Pran Nath's majestic expositions of the slow *alap* sections of *ragas* combined with his emphasis on perfect intonation and the clear evocation of mood had a profound impact on Western contemporary composers and performers. Minimalist music founders La Monte Young and Terry Riley, and the calligraphic light artist Marian Zazeela became his first American disciples. Fourth-world trumpeter Jon Hassell, jazz all-stars Don Cherry and Lee Konitz, composers Jon Gibson, Yoshimasa Wada, Rhys Chatham, Michael Harrison and Allaudin Mathieu, Sufi Pir Shabda Kahn, mathematician Christer Hennix, concept artist Henry Flynt, dancer Simone Forti, and many others took the opportunity to study with the master.

In 1972, he established his school in New York City, the Kirana Center for Indian Classical Music; in 1973, he was Artist-in-Residence at the University of California at San Diego and from 1973-1984, was Visiting Professor of Music at Mills College, Oakland, California. Pran Nath contributed many innovations to the design of the *tambura*. His special

natural finish "Pandit Pran Nath style" *tamburas* have achieved worldwide recognition. He also designed a continuous drone instrument based on the tuning fork, the *Prana Nada*. The La Monte Young / Marian Zazeela Just Dreams release, *The Tamburas of Pandit Pran Nath* (JD001), features two of the "Pandit Pran Nath style" concert *tamburas*, and the accompanying program booklet describes the development of his *tambura* designs and the *Prana Nadas* in detail.

He received numerous awards to continue his work in composition in the Kirana style of Indian classical music. He composed "Hari Tero Nam" in *Raga Anant Bhairavi* under a CAPS grant; "Hey Giradhara Gopala Lal" in *Raga Asavari Todi* under a Guggenheim Fellowship; and "Dira dira ta na" in *Raga 12-Note Bhairavi* under an NEA grant. From 1975 through 1985, the Dia Art Foundation, in cooperation with the Kirana Center for Indian Classical Music, presented frequent concerts of Pandit Pran Nath's work. From 1977 through 1985, Pran Nath held a commission from Dia Art Foundation to establish a performing, teaching and archival facility for the presentation and preservation of the Kirana tradition. He held commissions from the Pellizzi Foundation, Dia Art Foundation and MELA Foundation to perform and record an archive of the Kirana style of Indian classical music, including the six major *ragas*. Under the Pellizzi Foundation Commission he revived the lost *Raga Dipak* and composed "Jaga maga jyota jarey mandir meyn" set in this ancient *raga*.

In 1987, under a commission from MELA Foundation, with funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, Pandit Pran Nath composed "Darbar daoun" set in the classical *Raga Darbari*. In 1989, he received a commission from the Kronos Quartet to create a new work for voice and string quartet. This work, *Aba Kee Tayk Hamaree*, was recorded by Kronos with Pandit Pran Nath, voice, and released in 1993 on their Elektra Nonesuch album, *Short Stories* (79310-2, 4). *In Between the Notes*, a video documentary on his life and work, produced by the California College of the Performing Arts, was telecast on WNET and other public TV stations. A DVD edition of this 30-minute video documentary is available from MELA Foundation. His renditions of *Ragas Todi* and *Darbari* were featured on the Gramavision/Great Northern Arts recording, *Ragas of Morning and Night*, a 1986 *New York Times* Top Ten Critics Choice.

After becoming a permanent resident of the U.S. in 1972, Pandit Pran Nath returned to India almost every year with groups of American and European disciples and students who wanted to study his music in the land of its origin. From 1992 through 1996, he led master classes in India for several weeks annually. He performed and taught in Bremen, Germany in 1995, and in Paris, France in 1996. He inaugurated the MELA Foundation New York *Dream House* in November 1993 with three *Raga Cycle* concerts. On May 12 and 17, 1996, his two *Raga Cycle* concerts of Afternoon and Evening *Ragas* in the *Dream House* were his last public performances. He returned to Berkeley, California, and for the next 27 days he continued to teach several students daily, in the last days, even from his hospital bed, with a final telephone lesson in *Raga Darbari* just a few hours before he died of congestive heart failure and complications of Parkinson's disease at 6:26 PM, June 13, 1996.

The Kirana Center for Indian Classical Music in New York City is dedicated to the preservation, performance and instruction of the art of raga singing as embodied in the Kirana style. In addition to having presented past performances by Pandit Pran Nath, the Center presents continuing memorial celebrations, and offers private lessons in raga singing taught by Pandit Pran Nath's disciples, La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela. His work is continued by The Pandit Pran Nath Musical Composition Trust under the directorship of La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, and by his many disciples who have established his centers throughout the U.S., Canada and India.

In 2003, Just Dreams released the 2-CD set, *Midnight: Raga Malkauns* (JD003), featuring a 1971 live performance and a 1976 studio performance of the same *raga* and the same compositions now available in the regular edition with the CD-size booklet. La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela have released *The Tamburas of Pandit Pran Nath / An Homage* (JD001) as the first CD on their Just Dreams label, available through MELA Foundation in a custom limited first edition. In 2006, Terry Riley's Sri Moonshine label released *Raga Cycle / Palace Theatre / Paris 1972, Ragas Shudh Sarang and Kut Todi* (CD 003). The next Just Dreams release of Pandit Pran Nath's music will be *Raga Vrindabani Sarang*, now in production. *Raga Jayajayavanti* is planned for release by the Chisti Sabri School of Music, San Rafael, CA. Inquiries about Pandit Pran Nath's musical legacy, forthcoming recordings, and other programs of the Foundation may be addressed to MELA Foundation, 275 Church St., New York, NY 10013, fax: (212) 226-7802; email [mail@melafoundation.org](mailto:mail@melafoundation.org). The MELA website [www.melafoundation.org](http://www.melafoundation.org) includes extensive documentation on Pandit Pran Nath.

## Pandit Pran Nath Discography

Sri Moonshine, Richmond, CA., (2006). Pandit Pran Nath, *Raga Cycle / Palace Theatre / Paris 1972, Ragas Shudh Sarang and Kut Todi* (CD 003). Pandit Pran Nath, voice, La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, *tamburas*; Terry Riley, *tabla*.

Just Dreams, New York, N.Y., (2003). *Midnight: Raga Malkauns* (JD003) 2-CD Set: "4 VIII 71 San Francisco" *Raga Malkauns*, Pandit Pran Nath, voice; Ann Riley, Simone Forti, *tamburas*; Terry Riley, *tabla*; "21 VIII 76 NYC" *Raga Malkauns*, Pandit Pran Nath, voice, La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, *tamburas*; K. Paramjyoti, *tabla*.

Just Dreams, New York, N.Y., (2000). La Monte Young / Marian Zazeela, *The Tamburas of Pandit Pran Nath* (JD001): La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, *tamburas*.

Elektra Nonesuch, New York, N.Y., (1993). Kronos Quartet, *Short Stories* (79310-2, -4): Pandit Pran Nath, *Aba kee tak hamaree (It is my turn, Oh Lord)*, Pandit Pran Nath, voice; David Harrington, violin; John Sherba, violin; Hank Dutt, viola; Joan Jeanrenaud, cello; Terry Riley, John Constant, *tamburas*; Krishna Bhatt, *tabla*.

Gramavision/Great Northern Arts, New York, N.Y., (1986; CD issued 1991). *Ragas of Morning and Night* (61008-2, -4): *Raga Todi*, "Hara Bina Tero Kon Sahai", "Heri! Aba Guna De"; Side 2: *Raga Darbari*, "Hazrat Turkaman", "Nain so nain milaye". Pandit Pran Nath, voice; Mohammed Ahmed Bane, *sarangi*; Sheila Dhar, Lalita Gupta, *tamburas*; Prem Waleb, *tabla*.

Mills College Center for Contemporary Music, Oakland, CA., 1986. *Music from Mills*, In Celebration of the Centennial of the Chartering of Mills College 1885 - 1985; Side 5: *Raga Bhairavi*, "Dira Dira Ta Na". Pandit Pran Nath, voice; Terry Riley, voice and *tambura*; Shabda Khan, *tambura*; Benjamin Wertheimer, *tabla*.

Shandar Disques, Paris, France, 1972. *Ragas Yaman Kalyan and Punjabi Berva*; Side 1: *Raga Yaman Kalyan*, "Nada Brahma", "Prabhu ko Sumara"; Side 2: *Raga Punjabi Berva*, "Heri! Maika Na", "Kade Avin Ve". Pandit Pran Nath, voice; Shyam Bhatnagar, La Monte Young, *tamburas*; Fayyaz Khan, *tabla*.

Douglas International Records, New York, N.Y., 1968. *Earth Groove*; Side 1: *Raga Bhupali*, "Maha Dev"; Side 2: *Raga Asavari*. Pandit Pran Nath, voice; Shyam Bhatnagar, *tambura*; *tabla*.

### Video

California College of the Performing Arts, San Rafael, CA., 1986. *In Between The Notes, A Portrait of Pandit Pran Nath, Master Indian Musician*.

### Film

Satyajit Ray Productions, Calcutta, India, 1958. *Jalsaghar / The Music Room*, Satyajit Ray, Director. Music for concert scene: "Jala Rasa Bundana Barase", composed by Pandit Pran Nath in *Raga Mian ki Mulhar*. Salamat Ali Khan, voice.

## La Monte Young

La Monte Young began to pioneer the concept of extended time durations in 1957 and for over 50 years contributed extensively to the development of just intonation and rational number based tuning systems in his performance works and the periodic composite sound waveform environments of the *Dream House* collaborations formulated in 1962 with Marian Zazeela; presentations of his work in the U.S. and Europe, as well as his theoretical writings gradually had a wide-ranging influence on contemporary music, art and philosophy, including Minimalism, concept art, Fluxus, performance art and conceptual art. "During the summer of 1958 [Young] composed the *Trio for Strings*—a landmark in the history of 20th century music and the virtual fountainhead of American musical minimalism," (K. Robert Schwarz, *Minimalists*, 1996).

*Musician* magazine stated, "As the acknowledged father of minimalism and guru emeritus to the British art-rock school, his influence is pervasive," and in 1985 the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* wrote, "for the past quarter of a century he has been the most influential composer in America. Maybe in the world." In *Minimalism:Origins*, 1993, Edward Strickland added, "Young is now widely recognized as the originator of the most influential classical music style of the final third of the twentieth century."

In L.A. in the '50s Young played jazz saxophone, leading a group with Billy Higgins, Dennis Budimir and Don Cherry. He also played with Eric Dolphy, Ornette Coleman, Terry Jennings, Don Friedman and Tiger Echols. At Yoko Ono's studio in 1960 he was director of the first New York loft concert series. He was the editor of *An Anthology* (NY 1963), which with his *Compositions 1960* became a primary influence on concept art and the Fluxus movement. In 1962 Young founded his group The Theatre of Eternal Music and embarked on *The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys* (1964- ), a large work involving improvisation within strict predetermined guidelines. Young played soprano saxophone and sang with the group. Jennings, Dennis Johnson, Terry Riley, Angus MacLise, Marian Zazeela, Tony Conrad, John Cale, Jon Gibson, David Rosenboom, Jon Hassell and Lee Konitz are among those who worked in this group under Young's direction.

With Marian Zazeela in the early '60s, Young formulated the concept of a *Dream House*, a permanent space with sound and light environments in which a work would be played continuously. Young and Zazeela have presented works in sound and light worldwide, from music and light box sculptures to large-scale environmental installations, culminating in two Dia Art Foundation realizations: the 6-year continuous 6-story Harrison Street *Dream House* (NYC 1979-85) and the 1-year environment (22nd Street NYC 1989-90) within which Young presented *The Lower Map of The Eleven's Division in The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119* with the Theatre of Eternal Music Big Band. This 23-piece chamber orchestra was the largest Theatre of Eternal Music ensemble to appear in concert to date. Young has since presented *Dream House* sound environments at the Guggenheim Museum, New York (2009); Espace Duguay, Paris (1990); Ruine der Künste, Berlin (1992); Pompidou Center, Paris (1994-1995 and 2004-2005); Musée Art Contemporain Lyon (1999) and the MELA Foundation *Dream House: Sound and Light*, which opened at MELA Foundation, New York in 1993 and has continued through present.

Young and Zazeela helped bring renowned master vocalist Pandit Pran Nath to the U.S. in 1970 and became his first Western disciples, studying with him for twenty-six years in the traditional *gurukula* manner of living with and serving the guru. They taught the Kirana style and performed with Pandit Pran Nath in hundreds of concerts in India, Iran, Europe and the United States. In June 2002, Ustad Hafizullah Khan Sahib, the Khalifa of the Kirana Gharana and son of Pandit Pran Nath's teacher, Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan Sahib, conferred upon Young the distinction of becoming the first Western vocalist to receive the title of *Khan Sahib*. Described by Mark Swed in his October 2009 L.A. Times Blog as "pure vibratory magic," Young's Just Alap Raga Ensemble, founded in 2002 with Zazeela and their senior raga and visual arts disciple Jung Hee Choi, has become his primary performance vehicle.

The 1974 Rome live world premiere of Young's magnum opus *The Well-Tuned Piano* (1964-73-81-present), was celebrated by a commission for him to sign the Bösendorfer piano, which remains permanently in the special tuning. Gramavision's full-length recording of the continuously evolving 5-hour-plus work has been acclaimed by critics to be "the most important and beautiful new work recorded in the 1980s," "one of the great monuments of modern culture" and "the most important piano music composed by an American since the *Concord Sonata*." At the 1987 MELA Foundation La Monte Young 30-Year Retrospective Young played the work for a continuous 6 hours and 24 minutes.

In the '80s and '90s, The Theatre of Eternal Music Brass and String Ensembles led by Ben Neill and Charles Curtis presented numerous performances in the U.S. and Europe of *The Melodic Versions* (1984) of *The Four Dreams of China* (1962), one of Young's most important early minimal works, from which in 1991 Gramavision released a CD of *The Second Dream of The High-Tension Line Stepdown Transformer*. In 1990 Young formed The Forever Bad Blues Band, which has performed extensively in Germany, Austria, Holland, Italy and the U.S., presenting two to three-hour continuous concerts of *Young's Dorian Blues*, with Young, keyboard, Jon Catler, just intonation and fretless guitar, Brad Catler, bass, Jonathan Kane, drums, and Marian Zazeela, light design. In 1993 Gramavision released the 2-CD set, La Monte Young, The Forever Bad Blues Band, *Just Stompin' / Live at the Kitchen*.

For La Beauté, the celebration of the Year 2000, the French government invited Young and Zazeela to create a four-month, large-scale *Dream House* installation featuring the continuous DVD projection of the 1987 six-hour 24-minute performance of their collaborative masterwork, *The Well-Tuned Piano in The Magenta Lights*, set in a site-specific light environment created by Zazeela. Shown daily and visited by more than 200,000 people, the installation was headlined by *L'Express*: "La Monte Young: Le Son du Siècle." From May through October 2001, Kunst im Regenbogenstadl, Polling, presented the German premiere of the DVD *Dream House* installation, continuing from 2002 through the present as a long-term installation with the addition in 2007 of the European premiere of an electronically generated continuous periodic composite sound waveform environment of *The Magic Opening Chord* from *The Well-Tuned Piano*. In March-April 2002, MaerzMusik Festival of the Berliner Festspiele premiered the DVD installation of *The Well-Tuned Piano in The Magenta Lights* set in Zazeela's light design for the monumental Berlin Staatsbank. Just Dreams released the DVD of

*The Well-Tuned Piano in The Magenta Lights* (JD002) in 2001, described by *The Village Voice* as “The most important piano work of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.”

In 2003, under commission from four European organizations, Young and Zazeela created *Just Charles & Cello in The Romantic Chord* in a setting of *Abstract #1* from *Quadrilateral Phase Angle Traversals* with *Dream Light*, for solo cello, pre-recorded cello drones and light design. The full evening work was composed specifically for cellist Charles Curtis. He premiered it during 2003-04 in Paris, Dijon, Lyon, Berlin and the Kunst im Regenbogenstadl *Dream House*. In 2005 the American avant-premiere was presented as part of the La Monte Young 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration in three concerts at the MELA *Dream House*, New York. In May 2008, Curtis presented the Italian premiere at the Angelica Festival in Bologna. In 2005, the world premiere video installation of The Just Alap Raga Ensemble performing Young’s composition *Raga Sundara (ektal vilampit khayal)* set in *Raga Yaman Kalyan* was added to the long-term Regenbogenstadl *Dream House*. The 2005 La Monte Young 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration also included the avant-premiere performance at Kunst im Regenbogenstadl and the world premiere performances at MELA Foundation, New York of the Just Intonation Version (1984-2001-2005) of the *Trio for Strings* (1958) by The Theatre of Eternal Music String Ensemble led by Charles Curtis, as well as two concerts of the ongoing avant-premiere of Young’s *Raga Sundara* by The Just Alap Raga Ensemble at MELA Foundation. Featuring extended *alap* sections and sustained vocal drones in just intonation over tamburas, The Just Alap Raga Ensemble is now Young’s primary compositional and performance vehicle. He has presented annual concert series of the group at the MELA *Dream House* from 2002 to present, including two world premiere performances in March 2009 in the Young Zazeela *Dream House* sound and light environment installed at the Guggenheim Museum as part of the exhibition *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia*. The video of the March 21<sup>st</sup> Just Alap Raga Ensemble concert from the Guggenheim *Dream House* featuring Young, Zazeela, Jung Hee Choi and Da’ud Constant, voices; Jon Catler, sustainer electric guitar; Charles Curtis, cello; and Naren Budhkar, tabla, was installed permanently at Kunst im Regenbogenstadl to open their 2009 season, replacing the video of the 2005 *Raga Sundara* performance.

Over the years Kunst im Regenbogenstadl has hosted cellist Charles Curtis with The Theatre of Eternal Music String Ensemble in performances of several of *The Four Dreams of China*, including the world premiere of *The First Dream of The High-Tension Line Stepdown Transformer* in 2008, culminating in the world premiere cycle of all four of *The Four Dreams of China* over a three-day weekend in July 2011.

In 2012, Young and The Just Alap Raga Ensemble performed five Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tribute Tour concerts in Berlin, Karlsruhe and Polling, Bavaria *Dream Houses* with live video streaming to the Angelika Festival, Bologna and Fondazione Mudima, Milan.

In July 2015, Charles Curtis and The Theatre of Eternal Music String Ensemble gave the world premiere of the original full-length version of the *Trio for Strings* in *Regenbogenstadl Polling Dram House* and in September 2015, the American premiere in New York at the *La Monte Young Marian Zazeela Jung Hee Choi Dia 15 VI 13 545 West 22 Street Dream House*.

In 2015, the Dia Art Foundation acquired a unique version of the *La Monte Young Marian Zazeela Jung Hee Choi Dia 15 VI 13 545 West 22 Street Dream House*, which was open to the general public from June 13, 2015 to October 24, 2015. Young and Choi presented for the first time their sound environments in simultaneity: the La Monte Young *The Base 9:7:4 Symmetry in Prime Time When Centered above and below The Lowest Term Primes in The Range 288 to 224 with The Addition of 279 and 261 in Which The Half of The Symmetric Division Mapped above and Including 288 Consists of The Powers of 2 Multiplied by The Primes within The Ranges of 144 to 128, 72 to 64 and 36 to 32 Which Are Symmetrical to Those Primes in Lowest Terms in The Half of The Symmetric Division Mapped below and Including 224 within The Ranges 126 to 112, 63 to 56 and 31.5 to 28 with The Addition of 119* and the Jung Hee Choi *TONECYCLE BASE 30 HZ, 2:3:7, The Linear Superposition Of 77 Sine Wave Frequencies Set In Ratios Based On The Harmonics 2, 3 And 7 Imperceptibly Ascending Toward Fixed Frequencies And Then Descending Toward The Starting Frequencies, Infinitely Revolving As In Circles, In Parallel And Various Rates Of Similar Motion To Create Continuous Slow Phase Shift With Long Beat Cycles*.

## **Marian Zazeela**

Marian Zazeela is one of the first contemporary artists to use light as a medium of expression and perhaps the first to compose recurring motivic and thematic statements and permutations with light over time as in music. Over more than



five decades Zazeela has exhibited a unique iconographic vision in media encompassing painting, calligraphic drawing, graphics, film, light performance, sculpture and environment. Expanding the traditional concepts of painting and sculpture while incorporating elements of both disciplines, she created an original visual language in the medium of light by combining colored light mixtures with sculptural forms to generate seemingly three-dimensional colored shadows in radiant vibrational fields. Light and scale are manipulated in such a way that the colored shadows, in their apparent corporeality, become indistinguishable from the sculptural forms, enveloping the viewer in the continual interplay of reality and illusion. "While the shadows on the wall change shape, the fixed geometry that produces them yields a uniform intensity of colour. This luminous shadow is, paradoxically, more present, constant and solid in appearance than the object that produces it....This phenomenal reversal demonstrates that the relationship between the physical and the perceptual is far more subtle and malleable than is commonly understood," (Ted Krueger, *Interior Atmospheres (Architectural Design)*; Wiley, Profile No 193, Vol 78, No 3; pp. 12-15; May-June 2008). Zazeela's work has taken the directions of performance in *Ornamental Lightyears Tracery*, sculpture in the series *Still Light* and neon *Dream House Variations I-IV*, environment in *Dusk/Dawn Adaptation*, *Magenta Day / Magenta Night* and her major work *Light*, and video projection in *Quadrilateral Phase Angle Traversals*.

As artistic director of The Theatre of Eternal Music, she creates the works that form the innovative visual components of *Dream House*, a sound and light work in which she collaborates with composer La Monte Young. Zazeela has presented *Dream Houses*, light installations, performances and calligraphic drawing exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. Major installations include the 2009 Guggenheim Museum exhibition, The Third Mind, American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989; the 2005 Lyon Biennale; Tate Liverpool; Pompidou Center, Paris; Ruine der Künste, Berlin; 44th Venice Biennale; Galerie Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf; MELA Foundation's "La Monte Young 30-Year Retrospective," New York City; and Köln Kunstverein. She has received grants from the NEA, EAT, CAPS, Lannan and Cassandra Foundations. In 2009 she was the recipient with Young of the first Yoko Ono COURAGE Award in the arts to honor their having "never strayed from giving their uniquely creative efforts in Art to the world."

Under a commission from the Dia Art Foundation (1979-85), Zazeela and Young collaborated in a 6-year continuous *Dream House* presentation set in the 6-story Harrison Street building in New York City, featuring multiple interrelated sound and light environments, exhibitions, performances, research and listening facilities, and archives. *Arts Magazine* described the centerpiece of this installation: "There is a retreat to reverie as if one were staring up into the summer night sky. *The Magenta Lights* is experienced as a meteorological or astronomical event, a changing color display above one's head, like an art equivalent of the Northern Lights." And *Artforum* wrote: "Zazeela transforms material into pure and intense color sensations, and makes a perceptual encounter a spiritual experience. *The Magenta Lights* is an environmental piece in every sense of the word. What Zazeela has represented is the subtle relationship between precision and spirituality."

Zazeela's work has been significantly influential. Her abstract calligraphy was the primary influence on the calligraphy of the great poet and founding drummer of The Theatre of Eternal Music and the Velvet Underground, Angus MacLise. The visionary tradition of her curvilinear graphite on black and dot-style calligraphic drawings has also been carried on and taken to a highly imaginative level in both the pencil and pinhole drawings of her senior visual arts and raga disciple, Jung Hee Choi. Zazeela's *Ornamental Lightyears Tracery* has been credited by Glenn Branca in *Forced Exposure #16*, 1990, and by David Sprague in *Your Flesh # 28*, 1993, to have been the direct influence on Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable.

From 1961 to 1962, Zazeela worked extensively with legendary filmmaker Jack Smith. She was the featured model in *The Beautiful Book* (dead language press, 1962) and appeared in Smith's revolutionary *Flaming Creatures*, which was written for her and for which she also created the calligraphy for the film titles and credits. In 1964, Zazeela was filmed for Andy Warhol's *Screen Tests (Andy Warhol Screen Tests)*, Harry N. Abrams, 2006) and selected to be one of the models included in his *Thirteen Most Beautiful Women* series.

Zazeela began singing with Young in 1962 as a founding member of The Theatre of Eternal Music, and performed as vocalist in almost every concert of the ensemble to date. In 1970, she became one of the first Western disciples of renowned master vocalist Pandit Pran Nath and has since performed and taught the Kirana style of Indian classical music. She accompanied Pandit Pran Nath in hundreds of concerts throughout the world and continues to perform in The Just Alap Raga Ensemble, which she founded with Young and Choi in 2002.

Zazeela's one-year sound and light environment collaboration with Young, *The Romantic Symmetry (over a 60 cycle base) in Prime Time from 112 to 144 with 119 / Time Light Symmetry* (Dia Art Foundation, 22nd Street, NYC 1989-90)

was acclaimed by *Village Voice* critic Kyle Gann as "some of the strangest and most forward-looking art New York has to offer." Her 1990 Donguy Gallery, Paris exhibition of light works, purchased by the French Cultural Ministry National Foundation of Contemporary Art (FNAC) for their permanent collection, was exhibited in 1999 on the entire top floor of the Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art, and in 2004-2005 at the Pompidou Centre in the exhibition *Sons et Lumières*. Zazeela's current long-term installation, *Imagic Light*, forms a part of the *Dream House* Sound and Light Environment, which has been presented at MELA Foundation, New York since 1993. *Sound and Light: La Monte Young / Marian Zazeela*, published by Bucknell University Press in 1996, provides an in-depth collection of primary source materials on her work.

At the invitation of the French government for La Beauté exhibition celebrating the Year 2000, Young and Zazeela created a four-month *Dream House* in St. Joseph Chapel in Avignon. The installation featured the continuous DVD projection of the 1987 six-hour 24-minute performance of their collaborative masterwork, *The Well-Tuned Piano in The Magenta Lights*, in a site-specific light environment created by Zazeela. The art center, Kunst im Regenbogenstadl, Polling, Bavaria, presented a comprehensive solo exhibition of Zazeela's drawings from May through October 2000, accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog including essays, photographs, documentation and reproductions of 71 works. From May through October 2001, Kunst im Regenbogenstadl initiated a long-term light installation designed by Zazeela, featuring *The Well-Tuned Piano in The Magenta Lights* DVD projection, two new sculptures from her *Still Light* series, an installation of *Magenta Day / Magenta Night* and her neon work, *Dream House Variation III*. The installation has continued through the present with the inclusion of a new video projection work, *S symmetry V.1* from *Quadrilateral Phase Angle Traversals*, based on her *Word Portraits* series, as well as the video installation of the March 21, 2009 concert from the Guggenheim *Dream House* of The Just Alap Raga Ensemble performing Young's *Raga Sundara* in Zazeela's *Imagic Light II*. In 2010, in celebration of the 1000 year anniversary of the village of Polling, a large new entrance gallery space was added in Regenbogenstadl featuring two symmetrically placed pairs of Zazeela's signature mobiles in a configuration of *The Magenta Lights* with a sound environment of *The Opening Chord* from *The Well-Tuned Piano*.

In 2012, Zazeela created *Dream House* installations and performed with The Just Alap Raga Ensemble in five Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tribute Tour concerts in Berlin, Karlsruhe and Polling, Bavaria, with live video streaming of the Berlin concerts to the Angelika Festival, Bologna and Fondazione Mudima, Milan.

The Village Voice listed the MELA Church Street *Dream House* as the Best Art Installation in New York 2014, "A charge for the mind as much as for the eye and ear, the Dream House feels like a gift to our beleaguered city, where headspace is the most precious real estate of all."

In 2015, the Dia Art Foundation acquired a unique version of the *La Monte Young Marian Zazeela Jung Hee Choi Dia 15 VI 13 545 West 22 Street Dream House*, which was open to the general public from June 13, 2015 to October 24, 2015. This site-specific installation featured five light works by Zazeela; Neon, *Dream House Variation IV* (2009); Sculpture, *Ruine Window 1992 II* (2015) from *Still Light*; Sculpture, *Open Rectangle II* (2015) from *Still Light*; Installation, *Imagic Light III* (2015) from *Light*; Environment, *Magenta Day / Magenta Night 545 West 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Skylights and Window* (2015). The Village Voice wrote about her mesmerizing light works, "Zazeela's works play light, shadow, and color — the elements essential to form and its perception — off of one another. I spent a great deal of time looking in particular at *Imagic Light III* (2015), two thin curls of white aluminum suspended from the ceiling. Illuminated by two theatrical lights, one red and the other blue, the curls take on those hues while at the same time creating colored shadows on the wall behind them. Up close, the piece's quiet dazzle is a meditation on light and color. Seen from a distance, however, the shadows appear to take on a material presence, and the eye has to flex itself a little differently to distinguish the artwork from its cast silhouettes." (August 25, 2015)

## Jung Hee Choi

Jung Hee Choi, artist/musician, works in video, performance, sound, drawing and multi-media installations. Choi's work has been presented in the U.S., Europe and Asia, including FRAC Franche-Comté, France; Berliner Festspiele, Germany; Dia Art Foundation, Guggenheim Museum and MELA Foundation Dream Houses, NYC; FRESH Festival, Bangkok; Korea Experimental Arts Festival, Korea. Commissioned by MELA Foundation, her video sound performance and installation, *RICE*, was chosen as one of The 10 Best of 2003 in the December Artforum. The New York Times listed Choi's *Tonecycle for Blues* performed by her Sundara All Star Band as one of The Best Classical Music Performances of

2017. Choi, a disciple of La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela in the classical Kirana vocal tradition, founded with them The Just Alap Raga Ensemble in 2002 and has performed as vocalist in every concert, including those at the MELA *Dream House*, the five-concert Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tribute Tour in Berlin, Karlsruhe and Polling, Germany in 2012, the Yoko Ono Courage Award ceremony, the Guggenheim *Third Mind Live* concert series and the Merce Cunningham Memorial celebration in 2009. Her work is in the collection of Frac Franche-Comté, France and Dia Art Foundation, NYC. Choi graduated BA summa cum laude, and received her MA in art and sound from NYU.

Choi has presented series of environmental compositions with video, evolving light-point patterns, drawing, incense, performance and sound involving the concept of "Manifest, Unmanifest". Her synthesis of expression in this series collectively creates an intersubjective space as a unified continuum and emphasizes the totality of sense perceptions as a single unit to create a state of immersion. Choi's in-depth interview is featured in the online Asian Contemporary Art Week presentations organized by Asia Society, NY. Since 2008 Choi has been teaching Raga as instructor at the Kirana Center for Indian Classical Music. Choi appeared as guest artist and lecturer at the School of Visual Art, NYC and École supérieure d'art de Mulhouse, France. Choi's essay, *SOUND: A Basis for Universal Structure in Ancient and Modern Cosmology*, was published in a festschrift for *Antonio T. de Nicolas: Poet of Eternal Return*.

In 2015, the Dia Art Foundation acquired a unique version of the *La Monte Young Marian Zazeela Jung Hee Choi Dia 15 VI 13 545 West 22 Street Dream House*, which open to the general public from June 13, 2015 to October 24, 2015. In this installation, Young and Choi presented for the first time their sound environments in simultaneity.

On August 28, 2015, The New York Times wrote about Choi's multimedia installation *Ahata Anahata, Manifest Unmanifest IX* at *Dia 15 VI 13 545 West 22 Street Dream House*, NYC, "A movie-screen-size black surface is perforated by tiny holes through which bright light passes, creating a roughly symmetrical, Rorschach-like image resembling swirling galactic gas. This is overlaid by slowly changing, soft-focused shapes in colors from toasty brown to luminous blues that mask and reshape parts of the basic starry image. ... With extended listening, what at first seemed mechanically repetitious turns out to be a complex interweaving of different, slowly oscillating pitches. If you give in to it while watching Ms. Choi's hallucinatory screen, you may find yourself in an altered state of consciousness, on the verge of some ineffable, transcendental revelation."

Art in America reviewed the exceptional collaboration, "The most significant difference at Dia is the addition of two works by Jung Hee Choi, a longtime collaborator and disciple. *Environmental Composition 2015 #1* is a monumental 'light point drawing' and video projection, constructed from thin, black metallic sheets pierced with needles and lit from behind. At 14 feet tall and 23 feet wide, it is a brooding presence in the space. An accompanying audio piece, *Tonecycle Base 30 HZ, 2:3:7 (2012)*, is a cyclic rotation of 77 sine wave frequencies. It moves so slowly that it can be heard only retroactively, lingering as a sonic afterimage that, with its portamenti, invigorates Young's constant tones." (September 2015)

Choi was founding producer and director for Mantra TV, a cable and webcast vehicle for advanced arts in New York City and Korea from 1998 to 2006. Her programs featured original works of art, music, dance, experimental film, and discussions of creative processes. Choi curated BITT Festival for the Arts 2010; film/video programs for the Korea Experimental Arts Festival, 2010; Syn-Aesthetics, the Media Mavericks 1st Experimental Film Festival 2006. She co-curated Thinking MEDIA III, Seoul, Korea, 2012 and KU Exhibition of International Professors 2007, 2008, 2009, Seoul, Korea. Choi received The Experimental Television Center's *Finishing Funds 2006* award, supported by the Electronic Media and Film Program at NYSCA. In 2015, she received a project grants award from New Music USA.

Choi presented *RICE*, a video sound performance and installation in a setting of Marian Zazeela's *Imagic Light* environment in the MELA *Dream House*, NYC, in May--June 2003, and in October--November 2005 as a part of the La Monte Young 70th birthday celebration. The 2003 presentation was chosen as one of The 10 Best of 2003 in the December *Artforum*. Chrissie Iles wrote, "This video-sound work was presented in May at Dream House, the permanent installation of La Monte Young's eternal music and Marian Zazeela's magenta lights, and one of Dia founder Heiner Friedrich's great legacies. A hypnotic projection of rotating mandalic forms radiated out from Zazeela's magenta color field like silent fireworks, while the sound of Choi tracing a circle around the top of an overturned cooking pot with a rice paddle created a single repeating tone that resonated deep in the solar plexus." On March 28, 2009, Choi presented a live video sound performance and installation of *RICE* with *Composition in the style of La Monte Young's 1960 sustained friction sounds* in a setting of Marian Zazeela *Imagic Light II* in the *Dream House* at the Guggenheim Museum as part of *The Third Mind Live* series.

Choi's 3-week solo drawings, video, sound installation, *Ahata Anahata, The manifest The unmanifest, As a wheel that is one-rimmed and threefold with one-hundred and one spokes and where the illusion of the one springs from the other two*, was presented in April, 2007 at Tompkins Square Gallery, NYC. In a further expansion of the concept of *Ahata Anahata, Manifest Unmanifest*, Choi's solo exhibition, *Ahata Anahata, Manifest Unmanifest II*, presented at MELA Dream House in September 2009, included multimedia installations, a series of drawings, videos and a sound environment, illuminating various aspects of Choi's works and their relationships across different media.

MELA Foundation presented *Ahata Anahata, Manifest Unmanifest III* from August 21 to September 11, 2010, featuring three large-scale multimedia installations, a series of drawings, videos and her new sound environment, *Tonecycle Base 65 Hz, 2:3:7 Vocal Version*, with La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela and Jung Hee Choi improvising over the implied tonic. This exhibition premiered the installation work *Composition 2010 #1* created with needle perforated point drawings on black wrap with video. The drawings are viewed as indiscernibly moving light from video projection glowing through the pinholes, creating abstract and analogous representations of Manifest Unmanifest.

From August 25 to September 17, 2011, MELA presented Choi's *Ahata Anahata, Manifest Unmanifest IV* featuring her largest installation of calligraphic needle holes of moving light displayed in a wall of four floor-to-ceiling scrolls, her new *Environmental Composition 2011 #1*, and the world premiere of two live concerts of *Tonecycle Base 65 Hz, 2:3:7 Vocal Version* with La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela and Jung Hee Choi improvising over the imperceptibly changing implied tonic in a paired setting with Choi's acclaimed video feedback mandalic projection *RICE*.

Choi's *Manifest Unmanifest V* was presented by le Frac Franche-Comté, l'ERBA de Besançon, le Centre d'art mobile and SONIC/Le Quai, ESA de Mulhouse in ERBA de Besançon, France from December, 2011 through January, 2012. *Ahata Anahata, Manifest Unmanifest V* featured two large-scale multimedia installations, videos and her sound environment, *Tonecycle Base 65 Hz, 2:3:7 Vocal Version* with La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela in New York City and Jung Hee Choi in Besançon improvising live across the Atlantic for the opening reception. The relationship of the improvisations to the drone continuously elaborates the musical meaning of the pitch. This exhibition presented *RICE* and her more recent installation work *Composition 2011 #2* created with Light Point Drawings on black wrap with video. Part of this exhibition, *Environmental Composition 2011#2*, has been selected by the committee for acquisition of FRAC Franche-Comté for the museum collection, and exhibited at FRAC Franche-Comté through August 25, 2013.

In Berlin during the Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tribute Tour 2012, Choi presented a large-scale version of *Tonecycle Base 60 Hz, 2:3:7 Vocal Version* with Light Point Drawings # 3 and #4 from *Environmental Composition 2011 #2* on the entire ground floor of Villa Elisabeth from March 19 – 31, 2012 as part of the MaerzMusik Festival of the Berliner Festspiele. This 60 Hz version of *Tonecycle* allowed a harmonious interrelationship of the pitches to the pitches of the Young Zazeela *Dream House* taking place upstairs. In 2012, MELA presented Choi's *Ahata Anahata VI*, featuring four *Light Point Drawings* set in her new sound environment *Tonecycle Base 30 Hz, 2:3:7* with two highly acclaimed concerts performed by Choi, Zazeela and Young to overflow crowds.

Choi's video and sound works have been presented at BITT Festival 2010, Korea Experimental Arts Festival, 2009 and 2010, Chuncheon International Mime Festival 2007 and 2008, Korea; FRESH 2007 and 2009 festivals of international video art and short films, CODE, Bangkok; Diapason Sound and Intermedia Gallery, Gale Gates et al, Monkey Town, NYC; Gallery Hinterconti, Hamburg, Germany. Choi's drawing-video-sound installations were exhibited in Asian Contemporary Art Fair, NYC, November 2008, and Art Asia Miami, December 2008. Choi's Multimedia installation *Environmental Composition 2008 #1* was featured as part of Faces & Facts: Korean Contemporary Art in New York, Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Korean Cultural Service NY, December 2009. Choi's *RICE* installation was part of *One and Three Quarters of an Inch* curated by Peter Clough at The Former Convent at St. Cecilia's Parish, Brooklyn, September 2010.

Choi has collaborated with Young and Zazeela to produce long-term video documentation of their lives and work, including the *Dream House* and affiliated events. For the La Monte Young Marian Zazeela and The Just Alap Raga Ensemble long-term video installation of "05 II 05 PM NYC" *Raga Sundara*, ektal vilampit khayal set in Raga Yaman Kalyan at the Kunst im Regenbogenstadl *Dream House*, Polling, Germany, Choi was both video director and video mastering producer, as well as a vocalist in the Ensemble. Choi also directed the video of the March 21, 2009 Just Alap Raga Ensemble concert from the Guggenheim *Dream House*, featuring Young, Zazeela, Jung Hee Choi and Da'ud Constant, voices; Jon Catler, sustainer electric guitar; Charles Curtis, cello; and Naren Budhkar, tabla, which has now been installed permanently at Kunst im Regenbogenstadl, Polling, Germany from the opening of their 2009 season, replacing the video of the 2005 *Raga Sundara* performance.

## Naren Budhkar

Naren Budhkar was born into a musical family in Pune, the cultural capital of Western India; he later migrated to America. As a tabla player, he represents a link in the global cultural bridge. Naren studied with Ustad Shabbir Nisar, the tabla wizard from Hyderabad and the son of legendary Ustad Shaikh Dawood. From Ustad Nisar, Naren inherited a wealth of the rich centuries-old tradition of Indian percussion. He has used this tradition to contribute to many world music forms creating a dialogue between music and people the world over. As a classical tabla player Naren has performed with artists from all three categories of Indian music: vocalists, instrumentalists and dancers. Notable among these artists are Pandit Jasraj, Ustad Mashkoor Ali Khan, Dr. Alka Deo Marulkar, vocal; Ustad Aashish Khan, sarod; Pandit Ulhas Bapat, santoor; Pandit Barun Kumar Pal, hansveena; Pandit Krishna Bhatt, sitar; Pandit Ramesh Mishra, sarangi; Padmashree Kumudini Lakhia, Kathak.. Naren has contributed to many different genres of world music including rock, as a member of the acclaimed group 'Alms for Shanti' with whom he was featured on CNN; Irish-celtic music with the world famous 'De Dannen' band from Ireland; jazz, with the group 'Jazzhole;' folk through participation in the folk festivals of Canada from Toronto to Vancouver; and opera in a work composed by Doug Cuomo, the music director of *Sex and the City*.

Naren has been interviewed by B.B.C. Asia, featured on the NYU and Princeton radio stations and has been cited by the New York Times, El Diario, Vocero, and New York Newsday. He has performed in Canada, US, India, and the beautiful island of Puerto Rico with the dance ensemble fusion group 'Encuentro,' led by Paulette Beauchamp and Carlos Bedoya. He has performed in the NY Consulate of India, M.I.T., Columbia, Haverford and Kenyon; F.I.T., Aaron Davis Hall, Asia Society, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. He appears on many recordings including Circle of the Sun (Jazz), Indofunk (jazz trumpet), Summer of thousand years (Kurt Reil), Seeds of bliss (Corina Bartra), Enchanted Evening (Deepak Kumar), Kashmkash (Alms for Shanti), Sarva Bhuteshu (Manorama), Sukha Shanti (Anandashram) ([www.naren.org](http://www.naren.org)). Naren lives in New York City and is an active performer and teacher. Naren became a member of The Just Alap Raga Ensemble in June 2004.

**MELA Foundation**

*In Memoriam Pandit Pran Nath*  
(November 3, 1918 - June 13, 1996)

*Three Midday Concerts of Raga Vrindabani Sarang*

**Sundays, July 1, Saturday, July 7 and Sunday, July 15, 2018 • 1:00 pm**

***Dream House***

275 Church Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10013

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Ben Manley

**Video Documentation**

Jung Hee Choi, Mantra TV

**Cameras**

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**Production Assistants**

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