

venu



HARI PRASAD-ZAKIR HUSSAIN

HARIPRASAD-ZAKIR HUSSAIN • Venu

- 1 Rag Ahir Bhairav • alop and jor 29:41
- 2 Rag Ahir Bhairav • slow gat in rupak tal
fast gat in teental 36:12

Bansuri (bamboo flute) • Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia
Tabla • Ustad Zakir Hussain

Produced by • Zakir Hussain and Mickey Hart

Recorded at • the Stone House in Fairfax, California in November 1974

Recorded by • M.E.R.T. (Mobile Engineering and Recording Team)

Engineered by • Dan Healy, Mickey Hart, Rex Jackson, Betty Cantor

Re-Mix Engineer • Tom Flye

Assistant Engineer • Jeff Sterling

CD Mastering • Tom Flye, Kirk Felton

Special Thanks to • Ustad Alla Rakha, Antonia Minnecola and Creek Hart

Series Ethnomusicology Consultant • Fredric Lieberman

Cover Photo • John Werner

Design • Koepke Design Group

Liner Notes • Thomas Hunter and Greg Booth

Venu • Classical Flute of North India

Venu is the ancient name for the bamboo flute that is today called bansuri. Compared with a modern Western flute, with its myriad levers, buttons, and pads, the bansuri seems to be a relatively simple instrument: a length of bamboo with finger holes and an extra hole near one end, across which the player directs his breath. Yet in the hands of a master like Hariprasad Chaurasia, this simple bamboo tube can express all the intricacies and subtleties for which Indian music is renowned. The bansuri was developed as a classical instrument by the late Pannalal Ghosh, under the inspiration of the famed Ustad Allaudin Khan. After beginning his training under Shri Bholanath, Hariprasad-ji went on to complete his musical education with Shrimati Annapurna Devi, the illustrious daughter of Allaudin Khan. Hariprasad-ji thus carries on a musical tradition of the highest caliber, adding to it his own inimitable genius. He now stands at the pinnacle of achievement in North Indian music.

Rag Ahir Bhairav is a light classical melody for the early morning hours that combines the profound elements of Rag Bhairav with a lilting folk melody of the Ahir, a pastoral tribe of India's mountainous areas. Its mixture of romantic and devotional moods with a touch of mystery evokes the

expectant hush of the predawn hours. This is a time when romantic thoughts of the night mix with a feeling of reverence for the daily return of life-giving forces.

The flautist begins to unfold the haunting notes of this rag (accompanied only by the tonic drone of the tambura) in the loosely structured and rhythmically free alap section. Gradually the music takes on a feeling of rhythmic pulse as the artist moves into the section called jor. As the flautist begins a gat, or theme, the music takes on a new dimension with the introduction of a 7-beat rhythm cycle (3 + 2 + 2) played on the tabla drums. The performance builds in intensity and complexity, reaching a thrilling climax with high-speed variations in the 16-beat rhythm cycle called teental (4 + 4 + 4 + 4).

The performance captured on this recording represents an early meeting of Hariprasad-ji with the great percussionist Zakir Hussain. This historic 1974 concert at the Stone House in Fairfax, California is marked by a youthful vigour that cannot fail to inspire the listener. In an enthusiastic exchange of rhythmic complexities these two artists reveal the mastery of improvisatory technique that is a hallmark of Indian music.




Venu was recorded live at a 1974 concert in a large granite room, literally a stone house. B&K condenser microphones with custom-selected field effect transistors were directly coupled to a custom Ampex MM-1000 16-track recorder. This eliminated the normal mixing console and vastly reduced distortion, while enhancing the signal-to-noise ratio. We close-miked each instrument and also made a stereo image recording of the room in order to capture its natural stone ambience.



Venu was re-mixed July 30-31, 1989 at Studio X in Petaluma, CA. The 16-track master was mixed using a Studer A 80 16-track through a Neve 8058 console to a MCI analog 2-track recorder with Dolby SR noise reduction. Quantec digital reverberation was used for spacial enhancement. The analog 2-track tape was transferred directly to a Sony PCM digital 2-track for CD production. The mixdown process was monitored using Meyer 833 Studio Monitors, with sub-woofers.





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
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