

USTAD MOHAMMAD OMAR

VIRTUOSO FROM AFGHANISTAN



Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

featuring Zakir Hussain

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SFW CD 40439 Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

①	Emen / Tintal	21:36
②	Bopali / Jhaptal	10:10
③	Tabla solo	7:52
④	Pelo / Tintal	15:57
⑤	Keliwali	6:56

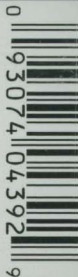
Ustad Mohammad Omar, Afghanistan's finest *rabab* player, became the first Afghan musician to teach in the United States when he arrived at the University of Washington in Seattle in 1974. This CD documents his only public performance in America and is the first full length album of his to be released in the United States. Playing his *rabab*, a short-necked lute that is plucked with a plectrum called a *shahbaz*, and accompanied on the *tabla* by a young Zakir Hussain, Mohammad Omar shared Afghan traditional music with the West in this memorable and important concert. Hussain and Omar had never met before that day, nor did they speak a common language, but their musical voices intertwine magically on this classic recording, available here commercially for the first time. The music is steeped in the traditions of Afghanistan and that country's own relationship to Indian and Pakistani musical influences, but this virtuoso performance stands alone as a triumph of Eastern music.



Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

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CD 9628



INTRODUCTION

Immediately after the retreat of Taliban forces from the Afghan capital of Kabul in autumn 2001, the first news reports to the West included video images of children, women and men dancing joyously in the streets to music. Music performance, whether instrumental or accompanying song or dance, had been outlawed during the Taliban regime. As soon as the oppression lifted, music returned, as it always does, for music and music-making signify normalcy.

Did you hear the winter's over?

The basil and the carnations cannot control their laughter.

The nightingale, back from his wandering, has been made singing master over the birds.

The trees reach out their congratulations. The soul goes dancing through the king's doorway...

Nothing can stay bound or be imprisoned. You say, "End this poem here, and wait for what's next."

*I will. Poems are rough notations for the music we are.**

Mystic and scholar Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-73), born in the then-Persian city of Balkh (near today's Mazar-i-Sharif), wrote those lines more than 700 years ago, but they apply well today.

British ethnomusicologist John G. Baily and Dutch colleague Jan van Belle spoke in late October, 2001, at a conference in Rotterdam, Netherlands. They told of music, musicians and conditions in Afghanistan, where under Taliban rule musicians were forbidden to perform or—along with everyone else—even to listen to music in the privacy of their homes, and when former professional musicians spoke sadly of their silent land, of weddings without dance or song. Before the Taliban years, weddings were the most frequent source of income for musicians, supplemented in the principal cities of Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Herat by live performances in teahouses, restaurants, hotels or private house concerts. In the countryside, music was also often heard at folk fairs. For a talented and fortunate few, the national radio station was another outlet. Now music has returned.

As in other Islamic cultures there is some ambivalence about the nature of music in Afghanistan; conservatives associate it with unlawful and licentious behavior including drunkenness and sexual promiscuity. At the same time, the concept of a spiritual way

of listening to music as a direct pathway to an experience of divine unity was put forward in the Persian Empire's cultural milieu as early as the 8th century. Both impulses remain strong and present in Afghan society today.

The territory called Afghanistan today was under Persian rule for centuries. Since the 19th century, struggles between and with the British and Russians have been interspersed with periods of self-rule, be they times of relative calm or internal unrest. Geographically, the nation's landscape varies dramatically: from high mountains and deep valleys, fertile foothills and plains to high, arid plateaus and deserts. Present-day Afghanistan's boundaries were set late in the 19th century. The population of Afghanistan at recent count was believed to be about 22 million people, composed largely of four tribal groups—Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek—along with a handful of other smaller groups. While mention of Afghanistan may conjure images of violent tribal power struggles in a desperately poor and desolate land, the Pashtun poet Malang Jan wrote:

Chay ay mor'i da khawra zaqawalay.

Ka pa har zhaban goyaa day kho Afghan day

That person who was given birth by his mother on this soil

Whatever language he speaks, he is still an Afghan. (Baily 2001:13)

Mohammad Omar, featured soloist on this album, directed the National Orchestra of Radio Afghanistan for many years. His work contributed greatly to the forging of an Afghan national identity through the development of a diverse music repertoire. He introduced many of the ethnic and linguistic groups of the nation to one another's folk traditions, celebrating them through broadcast and concert performances.

We offer this legendary recording to you in celebration and hope of a brighter future for the people of Afghanistan.

*From Coleman Barks' translation in *The Soul of Rumi: A New Collection of Ecstatic Poems*. 2001. San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, p. 134.

D.A. Sonneborn, Assistant Director, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

HISTORY

In 1962 I joined the faculty at the University of Washington and started its graduate program in ethnomusicology. One important aspect of that program was inviting important bearers of the music traditions of the world to come to Washington as visiting artists for a year and teach their music tradition. It was through this program and at the suggestion of Lorraine Sakata that we were honored to have the illustrious Mohammad Omar join us from Afghanistan.

Robert Garfias, Dept. of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine

COMMENTARY

The Music

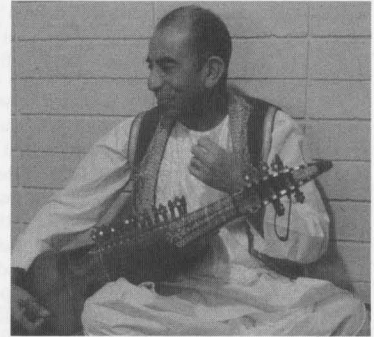
Traditional music of Afghanistan consists of a variety of major regional styles from the north (Mazar-i Sharif), northeast (Badakhshan), the west (Herat), southeast (Logar and Jalalabad), south (Kandahar) and other regions such as the Hazarajat, Panjshir and Nuristan. Even within these major regional styles, one finds distinctive genres that belong to specific ethnic groups or songs for specific occasions. The songs are played on a variety of instruments and sung in regional languages.

The music of Kabul developed out of the musical tastes of the urban elite and politically influential population of the capital of the country. Two institutions, the royal court and the radio station, determined the music of Kabul, and indeed, that of the nation.

Under the rule of Amir Sher Ali Khan (ruled from 1863–66 and 1868–69), Indian classical musicians were invited to become court musicians in Kabul. They were given lands in the section of old Kabul now known as *kharabat* or entertainment quarters. They were reputed to have been transported back and forth from *kharabat* to the court on elephants. From that time on, Indian classical music (the Hindustani tradition of North India) became established as the elite art tradition of Afghanistan. These trans-

planted Indian musicians gained a preeminent status among Afghan musicians and were given the title of *ustad*. The descendants and students of these Hindustani musicians in Kabul kept strong musical ties to India and Pakistan. During the reign of Mohammad Zahir Shah (ruled from 1933–73), Hindustani musicians such as Ustad Villayat Khan were regularly invited to court for private performances and music lessons for individual members of the royal family.

A radio transmitter was first introduced to Afghanistan during the reign of Amanullah Khan (1919–29) as a part of his efforts to modernize the country, but with very limited transmission coverage, it did not last beyond a few years. In 1941, a government radio station was established in Kabul in the area of Pul-e Bagh Umumi. Known as Radio Kabul, it was administered through the Ministry of Information and Culture, hiring radio musicians who enjoyed official sanction and support like government bureaucrats. In 1964, the station moved to Chaharah-ye Ansari and became known as Radio Afghanistan. From its inception in 1941 until the 1980s, a number of foreign advisors from Germany, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and the United States not only helped the Afghans technically, but also helped shape the content and sound of radio music that most Afghans today identify as their “national” music.



Modeled on the Soviet model of a people's ensemble, the Kabul Radio Orchestra (and later, the National Orchestra of Radio Afghanistan) consisted of regional folk instruments brought together to play regional songs and some newly composed songs. Two long-necked plucked lutes, the Herat *dutar* and the Northern *tanbur*, became standard orchestra instruments. The preponderance of professional radio musicians from Logar

added a strong Pashtun flavor to this national radio orchestra, particularly with the sounds of the *rabab*, a short-necked plucked lute, and the *sarinda*, a bowed lute. Also prominently heard were Hindustani bowed instruments, the *delroba* and the *sarangi*. For the more classically oriented pieces, the drone of the *tambura* (sometimes spelled *tanpura*) was added. Depending on the style (regional or classical), drums such as *tabla* (pair of hand-played drums), *zirbaghali* (single-head, goblet-shaped drum) or *dhol* (double-headed barrel drum) were used. Other commonly included instruments were the folk flute, *tula*, and the Western clarinet and mandolin. The orchestra members were professional musicians who learned their repertoire orally. The leader of the orchestra, most likely the *rabab* player, played a melodic phrase first, which was followed and imitated by the rest of the orchestra members.

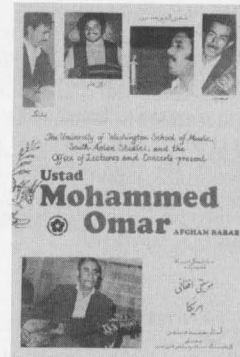
Another ensemble of mainly Western instruments (mandolin, trumpet, saxophone, violin, clarinet, piano, flute, accordion, etc.) known as the "Jazz Orchestra" or "Number Two Orchestra" was established in 1953. The Jazz Orchestra was based on the principles of the Western musical system including harmony. For the most part, these orchestra musicians had formal musical training. For example, the conductor and arranger of the Jazz Orchestra from 1956 to 1970, Ustad Sarmast, was formally trained under the tutelage of Turkish music teachers in the Afghan Military Academy.¹ Later, musical advisers from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were invited to the Radio to advise and teach orchestra members the principles of composition and conducting. Besides the professional musicians at Radio Afghanistan, a new breed of amateur radio musicians was hired, both instrumentalists and singers from socially established families (members of the extended royal family or children of prime ministers, generals or other officials). Their repertoire consisted of newly composed popular songs. The Radio Afghanistan repertoire included Afghan classical art music, as well as popular and folk songs in both Dari (Persian) and Pashtu.

¹ From A.N. Sarmast, "Ustad Mohammad Salim Sarmast: An Outstanding Representative of Contemporary Afghan Music." Unpublished paper, Monash University, Australia, n.d.

The Artist

Ustad Mohammad Omar (d. 1980)² represents to most Afghans the embodiment of Afghan music. As a *rabab* virtuoso, he helped raise the status of a beloved folk instrument to the level of a classical, solo instrument. He was born to a family of musicians in the traditional musicians' quarters of Kabul known as *kharabat*. He started his musical training at the age of ten under the tutelage of his father Ustad Ibrahim, a *tabla* player, learning to sing and play the *sarod*, *rabab* and *dutar*. He joined the staff of Radio Afghanistan when he was 32 and eventually rose in the ranks to become Director of the National Orchestra of Radio Afghanistan, for which he composed over a hundred melodies known as *naghma*. He was respected and renowned for his knowledge of the Indian raga system, which he taught to his *rabab* students. His influence went beyond those he actually taught. For example, Khaled Aman, a member of the Ensemble Kaboul of Geneva, dedicates a *rabab* composition to Ustad Mohammad Omar, "whom [he] often listened to when he worked for Radio-Kabul, and whose playing made a lasting impression on [him]."³

I first met Ustad Mohammad Omar in 1967 while I was a Fulbright grantee in Afghanistan. Since I was interested in Afghan music, a friend recommended that I study *rabab* with the finest musician in Afghanistan. He went to see the Ustad on my behalf, and the Ustad agreed to teach me, a foreign student, and his first female student. I returned to Afghanistan in 1971, renewing my relationship with my Ustad. We discussed the possibilities of his coming to teach in the United States and made plans that were real-



² The date of his death has been noted as Thursday, the 22nd of Jawza, 1359 (June 12, 1980) at 2 pm. The date of his birth has been cited as 1905, yet program notes for a 1975 concert in Kabul state that Mohammad Omar was born 54 years ago. My own notes estimated his age to be in the 50s at that time.

³ *Nastaran: Ensemble Kaboul*. Ethnomad, Arion ARN 64543. Paris, 2001.

ized in 1974 when Ustad Mohammad Omar was awarded a Fulbright-Hays Foreign Scholar Fellowship to teach at the University of Washington in Seattle, where I was then an ethnomusicology Ph.D. student.

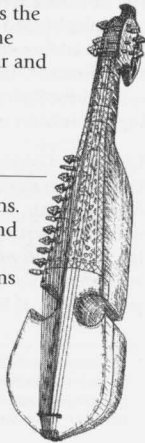
Although he had toured outside of Afghanistan in neighboring countries of the then-Soviet Union as well as Pakistan and India, he had never been to Europe or the United States. Speaking little English, and never having been away from home for more than a few weeks at a time, he made the courageous decision to become the first Afghan musician to teach his music, instrument and art to students at a major American university. Arriving in Seattle on the eve of the month of Ramadan (the Islamic month of fasting), he kept the fast while coping with the vagaries of living a completely foreign life. His colleagues and students constituted his American "family."

He returned to Afghanistan laden with a scrapbook of photographs, newspaper articles and letters, and with video and audio tapes of his performances in the United States. The videotapes were shown on Afghanistan Television as well as the American Center of the United States Information Service in Kabul. The American Center also sponsored a concert featuring Mohammad Omar and his U.S. experience.

The Instrument

The *rabab* holds a special place in the hearts and minds of most Afghans. It is indisputably the best known of all Afghan musical instruments, and the most widely spread throughout the country. Originally from the Kabul-Ghazni region, it is popular outside the country in certain regions of Pakistan, and in Kashmir. The Afghan *rabab* is regarded as the predecessor of the Indian *sarod*.

The *rabab* is a plucked lute with a deep, waisted body. The entire instrument is carved out of a single piece of mulberry wood. The neck and upper body are hollow, covered with a thin piece of wood, and a



membrane covers the lower body. It has three main playing strings tuned a fourth apart. The first or front string, *jalau*, and the middle string, *miana*, are nylon and may be composed of single strings or double courses. The largest string, *kata*, is single and made of gut. There are from 12 to 15 wire sympathetic strings, two or three of which are strung to pegs in the main peg box, with the others strung to pegs on the side of the *rabab*. The highest pitched sympathetic string is often strung high across the bridge so that it may be plucked in ornamental passages. The *rabab* is played with a wooden plectrum or pick called *shahbaz*. The *rabab's* deep, resonant sound epitomizes the sound of Afghan music, particularly that of the Pashtun regional styles where it functions as an important accompaniment to folk songs and an essential member of popular instrumental ensembles consisting of *rabab*, harmonium and *tabla*. It is featured in Pashtu folk literature such as the famous love story of Adam Khan and Durkhane, in which the lovely Durkhane is first attracted to Adam Khan because of his masterful *rabab* playing.

This regional folk instrument gained widespread popularity and developed into a classical solo instrument as well. As the lead instrument of the radio orchestra, particularly under the leadership of Mohammad Omar, its "sound" was prominently heard wherever radio waves penetrated. Today, the instrument is revered by Afghans all over the world as Afghanistan's "national instrument."

The Concert

On November 18, 1974, Ustad Mohammad Omar gave a public concert at the University of Washington. He was accompanied on the *tabla* by a young Zakir Hussain, who graciously agreed to come to Seattle to perform with Ustad Mohammad Omar, an Afghan musician he had not met before. Zakir Hussain arrived on the morning of the concert to meet and rehearse with Ustad Mohammad Omar. The Ustad spoke no English, Urdu, Hindi or Panjabi. Zakir Hussain spoke no Farsi or Pashtu. Yet, they spoke the same musical language and played one of the most memorable concerts of Afghan music that I have had the privilege of hearing.

The concert was also memorable to Ustad Mohammad Omar, as reported by Larry Porter, a *rabab* student who later studied with Mohammad Omar in Kabul:

"His eyes would light up whenever he talked about the concert he played with Zakir Hussain in Seattle. Apparently, he really enjoyed traveling to America and sharing his music with the people there. Unfortunately, as far as I know, the Seattle concert was the only time he did that" (www.afghanmagazine.com/april2000/music/larry/index.html).

The concert program consists mainly of Afghan classical music. An improvisatory introduction of a melodic mode, *shakal*, is followed by the *naghma*, a composition in a fixed melodic mode and rhythmic cycle. *Rabab* improvisations of the *naghma* are mainly rhythmic, emphasizing complex, right-hand stroking patterns.

1. Ustad Mohammad Omar, *rabab*: Shakal and Naghma in the melodic mode of Emen (Yeman); Zakir Hussain, *tabla*: Tintal, a rhythmic cycle of 16 beats

The *naghma* is in the rhythmic mode (*tala*) of Tintal (16 beats). The 7-tone scale of Emen includes a distinctive raised 4th degree. This performance begins with a *shakal* improvisation. The *naghma* includes four sections, *astai*, *antara*, *bog* and *sanchai*.⁴ The *naghma* begins with the *astai* section with the principal melody as dictated below by Ustad Mohammad Omar during a lesson. It is represented by letters representing Indian solfege syllables *sa*, *re*, *ga*, *ma*, *pa*, *dha*, *ni* (analogous to our solfege syllables, *do*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *so*, *la*, *ti*).⁵

⁴ These four sections are used in the *druphad* repertoire and are usually called *sthayi*, *antara*, *abhoga* and *sanchari*. See Indurama Srivastava, *Dhrupada: A Study of its Origin, Historical Development, Structure and Present State*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.

⁵ The first row represents the rhythmic cycle (*tala*) of 16 beats. The second and third rows show the melody as represented by the initial letters of syllables designating pitches. Each pitch except for *sa* and *pa* has a lowered and a raised form. The lowered pitch of *re*, *ga*, *dha* and *ni* are usually indicated by an underline. Normally, the raised 4th degree, *ma*, is shown with a line above, while the regular *ma* has no underline, but here I will identify the raised *ma* by italics. A dot below the syllable indicates pitches in the lower octave, while a dot above the syllable indicates pitches in the upper octave.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
P	P	P	MG	P	P	P	PM	D	D	D	MP	G	G	NS	RG
N	N	N	NN	S	S	P	P	G	G	NS	RG	N	N	S	S

This melody is constantly repeated but in various rhythmic settings. There is only a brief reference to the *antara* section that begins the melody on *ni* in the upper registry before joining the main melody again. The next section, *bog*, has a new short melody repeated several times in different rhythmic settings. The piece ends with the *sanchai* section consisting of yet another short melody. During the performance, the first sympathetic string of the *rabab* breaks, but Ustad Mohammad Omar never stops playing.

2. Ustad Mohammad Omar, *rabab*: Shakal and Naghma in the melodic mode of Bopali (Bhupali); Zakir Hussain, *tabla*: Jhaptal, a rhythmic cycle of 10 beats

Mohammad Omar retunes the sympathetic strings to the new mode, Bopali (Bhupali), and covers for the broken string. The mode of Bopali consists of five notes represented in Indian solfege syllables as *sa*, *re*, *ga*, *pa*, *dha* without the 4th and 7th degrees (*ma* and *ni*). The *naghma* is composed by Ustad Mohammad Omar and is in the rhythmic mode (*tala*) of Jhaptal (10 beats). The main melody is represented as:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
S	G	R	P	G	D	P	Ṡ	D	P
G	P	G	R	S	G	R	S	D	D

Other than rhythmic variations on the main melody, phrases known as *palta* are inserted. The *palta* consists of a motif or theme (both rhythmic and melodic) that is varied and developed into a section, all the while keeping to the 10-beat *tala* cycle of Jhaptal. At the end of this piece, Zakir announces an early intermission so that Mohammad Omar can replace the broken string on his *rabab*.

3. Zakir Hussain: *Tabla* solo in the rhythmic cycle of Jhaptal (10 beats)

Ustad Mohammad Omar accompanies Zakir Hussain by playing a 10-beat melody to mark the rhythmic cycle which he continues to repeat throughout the *tabla* solo. Zakir counts out the rhythmic cycle for the audience before he begins his solo. In the middle of his solo, Zakir improvises complicated vocal drum patterns before playing them on the *tabla*. As the solo builds to a climax, the patterns get faster, more complicated and longer.

4. Ustad Mohammad Omar, *rabab*: Shakal and Nagma based on the melodic mode of Pelo (Pilu); Zakir Hussain, *tabla*: Tintal, a rhythmic cycle of 16 beats

An Afghan classical piece based on the melodic mode of Pelo (Pilu). The improvisatory *shakal* section is in a mixture of melodic modes related to Pelo. The *nagma* is in the rhythmic mode of Tintal (16 beats) and consists of four sections, *astai*, *antara*, *bog* and *sanchai*. The *sanchai* is taken from the second phrase of the *antara* melody. *Palta* sections are interspersed between the *sangchai* repetitions. The *astai* melody in a 16-beat cycle as dictated by Mohammad Omar is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
G	G	G	RS	R	R	R	SN	S	S	S	RR	S	DD	P	GR

5. Ustad Mohammad Omar, *rabab*; Zakir Hussain, *tabla*: Keliwali in the melodic mode of Kastori

The final piece of the concert is a *keliwali*, a generic term that designates popular Afghan (Pashtun) folk melodies. It is in the Kastori melodic mode, often used for

popular Pashtun melodies. The melody has a pentatonic ascending scale: *sa, ga, ma, pa, da, sa* and a descending scale *sa, ni, and da* resting on *pa*.

The Recording

The concert recording was made available to the artists. Soon after Ustad Mohammad Omar's return to Afghanistan, bootleg copies started to proliferate. It became a coveted item for Afghans both inside and outside of Afghanistan. Connoisseurs of Hindustani classical music soon had copies. Those who heard the tape wanted to buy their own copies.

The Afghans deserve to have their music represented by a respected label with high-quality production values. I thus turned to Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, whose catalog includes a 1961 Radio Kabul recording of *Music of Afghanistan* (FE 4361). It contains a classical *rabab* solo by Ustad Mohammad Omar, a folk song performed by Ustad Mohammad Omar, *rabab*, and Gul Alam, *dhol*, and an example of the Afghan National Orchestra led by Ustad Mohammad Omar. It serves as a wonderful companion to this present recording. The two recordings span some thirteen years and represent the artistry of one of Afghanistan's most famous and respected musicians.

At a time when Afghans are undergoing the threat of losing their cultural heritage, either by force or through attrition,⁶ it is hoped that recordings of Afghan music such as this one can provide inspiration and hope to a people who have undergone unimaginable loss and pain. This compact disc of the 1974 concert is dedicated to Afghanistan and all the Afghans who proudly remember and honor their music and musicians, and to all the young Afghans who are entrusted with the task of preserving and developing their musical heritage for the future.

Hironi Lorraine Sakata, Dept. of Ethnomusicology, University of California, Los Angeles

⁶ See a report on music censorship in Afghanistan by John Baily, "Can you stop the birds singing?" *The Censorship of Music in Afghanistan*. Copenhagen: Freemuse, 2001.

DISCOGRAPHY

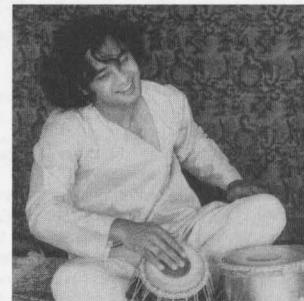
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Zakir Hussain and The Rhythm Experience, Moment Records.
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Diga, Rykodisc.

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Zakir Hussain, a child prodigy, was touring by the age of twelve, the gifted son of his great father, *tabla* legend Ustad Alla Rakha. Zakir came to the United States in 1970, embarking on an international career which includes no fewer than 150 concert dates a year. He has composed and recorded many albums and soundtracks, and has received widespread recognition as a composer for his many ensembles and historic collaborations.

Widely considered a chief architect of the contemporary world music movement, Zakir's contribution to world music has been unique, with many historic collaborations including Shakti, which he founded with John McLaughlin and L. Shankar, the Diga Rhythm Band, Making Music, Planet Drum with Mickey Hart, and recordings and performances with artists as diverse as George Harrison, Joe Henderson, Van Morrison, Jack Bruce, Tito Puente, Pharoah Sanders, Billy Cobham, the Hong Kong Symphony and the New Orleans Symphony.



Zakir Hussain is today appreciated both in the field of percussion and in the music world at large as an international phenomenon. A classical *tabla* virtuoso of the highest order, his consistently brilliant and exciting performances have not only established him as a national treasure in his own country, India, but gained him worldwide fame. The favorite accompanist for many of India's greatest classical musicians and dancers, from Ali Akbar Khan and Ravi Shankar to Birju Maharaj and Shivkumar Sharma, he has not let his genius rest there. His playing is marked by uncanny intuition and masterful improvisational dexterity, founded in formidable knowledge and study.

For tour dates and more information contact Moment Records / 237 Crescent Road / San Anselmo, CA 94960 / tel: 415.459.6994 / fax: 415.459.7742 / email: Moment237@AOL.com or go to www.momentrecords.com.

Hiromi Lorraine Sakata is Professor of Ethnomusicology at University of California, Los Angeles. Before joining the UCLA faculty, she taught at the University of Washington for twenty years. She conducted field research in Afghanistan in 1966-67 and again in 1971-73. In 1987, she conducted research in Pakistan, particularly with Afghans living in Quetta. More recently, her focus has been on the devotional music of Pakistan, in particular the music at Sufi shrines in Pakistan. She is the author of *Music in the Mind: The Concepts of Music and Musician in Afghanistan* (Kent State University Press), a two-volume recording, *Folk Music of Afghanistan* (Lyricord Discs) and numerous articles on music of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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Zakir Hussain appears courtesy of Moment Records.
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Map, cover photo and drawings by Tom Sakata
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ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS RECORDINGS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Moses Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are available by special order on high-quality audio cassettes or CDs. Each recording includes the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes and recordings to accompany published books and other educational projects.

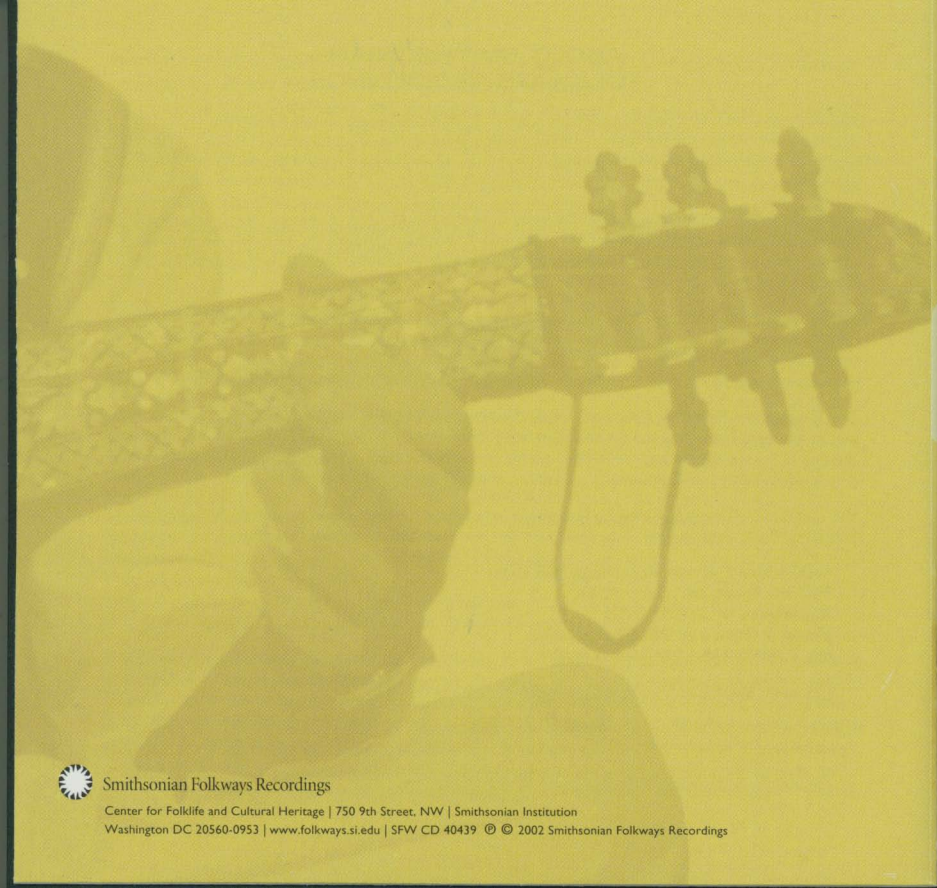
The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Monitor, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. They are one of the means through which the center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Monitor, and Paredon recordings are all available through:

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings Mail Order
750 9th Street, NW, Suite 4100,
Washington, DC 20560-0953
phone: 1 (800) 410-9815 (orders only)
fax: 1 (800) 853-9511 (orders only)

(Discover, MasterCard, Visa, and American Express accepted)

For further information about all the labels distributed through the center, please consult our Internet site (www.folkways.si.edu), which includes information about recent releases, our catalogue, and a database of the approximately 35,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings (click on database search). To request a printed catalogue write to the address above or e-mail folkways@aol.com



Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage | 750 9th Street, NW | Smithsonian Institution

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