



Niloy Ahsan

Dhrupad & Beyond



The notes of a Raga flow soft and reposeful, yet very precise. Niloy Ahsan's voice is sure and supple, and seems to rise from a deep and inexhaustible well. A 21st generation Dhrupad musician of the majestic Dagar lineage, Niloy Ahsan is a rare unconventional vocalist, honig a unique repertoire, in-depth understanding of Indian philosophy and Marga Sangeet as well as traditional and classical styles of Dhrupad, Dhamar and Khayal. By amalgamating an equipoise between the austerity of Dagarvani Dhrupad and the versatile musical possibilities of the Sadharani Geeti, Niloy has emerged as one of the finest and most promising young Dhrupad vocalists.

Niloy's music is exquisite, explosive and yet introspective and soul-searching. He brings about the particular traits of the Raga he sings, along with a blossoming of Bhava and Rasa. And because a rigorous sadhana or spiritual effort is at the root of this, listeners from all walks of life can tune in and find a place in his music, that they can call their own.



Exploring Dhrupad – the Nada-Yoga

The ancient Rishis and the Sufi mystics saw music as meditation, recitation of Mantra, an empathetic way of healing, a path to explore the divine. For Niloy too, music is the exploration of sound, and the play of Prana. Niloy's approach to singing is thus holistic, as is the Dhrupad music itself. The form is deeply embedded in a philosophy of self-awareness, of how we sit, speak, and by extension, sing. This is why in Dhrupad the raga unfolds slowly and with a sense of measure. The forte of the form is the Alap, the unfolding of which transcends the singer and the listener to a realm beyond sound.

Dhrupad preserves many of the most ancient principles of music described in the Vedas, Samhitas, Upanishads and Shiksha literatures, which might have sunk into oblivion with the development of other forms. Such preservation has been possible due to the heritage of the Dhrupad Guru-Shishya tradition. Various Dhatus and Kriyas, explore the musical principles in the most elaborate manner, and are taught in a rigorous fashion. But sincerity and empathy of the heart are essential components of this form as well. For Niloy, the practice of Dhrupad is a path to salvation.

Niloy aspires to explore the depth of Dhrupad – the Naad-Yoga – in its fullest manner, while staying true to the core spiritual yogic principles well-established, while remaining open to new and diverse musical aspects as well as create awareness and make the heritage connect with many at a global scale.

A student of Architecture turned into a professional vocalist, a teacher and a Postgraduate in Music, Niloy's background in music is not only in the Dhrupad tradition. He has trained extensively, since an early age, in the Khayal tradition as well as in Rabindra Sangeet and Nazrul Geeti.



Training

- Dhrupad under Pandit Umakant & Ramakant Gundecha (Gundecha Brothers)
- Khayal in the Indore-Kirana Parampara under Pandit Ashit dey
- Indian voice culture, Khayal and Nazrul geeti under Janab Sujit Mustafa
- Khayal in the Agra Parampara under Ustad Mustaqur Rahman
- Rabindra Sangeet under Janab Mamun Abdullah
- Khayal and Nazrul Geeti in Raagini Sangeet Vidyalay

Performances & Teaching

- 2018-Present: Teaching in Chennai Dhrupad Gurukul at Cultural Centre - SPACES
- 2014-2016: Taught Khayal and Dhrupad in Shankar Mahadevan Academy
- 2011-2013: Collaborated with Russian Jazz Maestro and composer Vyacheslav Guyvoronsky and percussionist Denis Kucherov; performed as a trio in major venues in Russia; published two albums: Around Silence and Dodecameron
- 2013: Performed in St. Petersburg Court Capella with the legendary Russian singer Boris Grebenshikov and with the St. Petersburg State Capella Symphony Orchestra
- 1999-2006: Performed as enlisted artiste in Bangladesh National Television and National Radio

Important Festivals

- International Indian Music Festival, Saint-Petersburg
- Annual Classical Music Festival, Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
- Cultural Centre Dom, Moscow
- Dhrupad Utsav, Ram Krishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata
- Court Chapel, Saint Petersburg
- International Dhrupads Festival, Udaipur
- Delhi International Arts Festival, Delhi
- Chayanat Classical Music Festival, Dhaka
- Dhrupad Utsav, Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai

Awards & Acknowledgments

- Fellowship from Jaipur Gems Charitable Trust, Mumbai, awarded by Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Ustaad Ghulam Mustafa Khan, Vidhushi Dr N Rajam, Pandit Arvind Parikh
- Tata Trust Scholarship
- Notun-Kurhi Natinal Award, awarded by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia
- First place in National Rabindra Sangeet Summit, awarded by iconic figure Waheedul Huq

Albums

- 'Around Silence', released in London, UK in 2013; internally marketed by 'Leo Records'
- 'Dodecameron', released in St. Petersburg in 2012 by 'Svodnaya Kultura'

Youtube

Niloy Ahsan

www.youtube.com/channel/UC-C_G25Wq8aOxncCjZr0uMQ



Press

"Niloy, the gifted young disciple of Gundecha Brothers, impressed not just with his well groomed voice but also with his total tunefulness, singing against just the drone of Tanpura. The reposeful Alap and Dhrupad in Raga Bageshree spoke of his total commitment and dedication towards this demanding discipline."

- The Hindu

"Ahsan is gifted with a gorgeous voice and masters the subtleties of traditional Indian singing. At times, he conveys a mystical force comparable to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (different cultures, same spirit)."

- Monsieur Délire (France)

"An uncompromising vocalist..."

- Percorsi Musicali (Italy)

Contact

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