

NEWS RELEASE

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CHICAGO CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF RAVI SHANKAR

Wednesday, April 7, 2010, 6-10 pm

at the Chicago Cultural Center

Film Screening of “Ravi Shankar: Between Two Worlds” followed by live concert of Indian classical music by Purbayan Cahtterjee, Rakesh Chaurasia, and Yogesh Samisi

In celebration of Ravi Shankar’s 90th birthday and the recent launch of his personal recording label, East Meets West Music, the Chicago Cultural Center is proud to present an evening of film and music dedicated to the life and achievements of the legendary Indian sitar master. Ravi Shankar is long credited with bringing Indian classical music, and in particular, the sitar, to the Western musical world over 50 years ago. The film and concert are both free and open to the public and seating is on a first come basis.

The free event begins at 6 pm with a screening of the 2002 documentary, *Ravi Shankar: Between Two Worlds* (89 min) in the Chicago Cultural Center’s Claudia Cassidy Theater. Following two years of the legendary sitarist’s life, Mark Kidel directs this definitive account of India’s most celebrated musician. Against the backdrop of seven decades of innovative collaboration with Western musicians, Shankar became an international superstar, or as his friend George Harrison called him – “the godfather of world music.” With archival and family photos, interviews, and, of course, the music, this finely crafted documentary travels from the master’s early days to his on-going master classes. The film was co-produced by Jane Weiner and J. P. Weiner Productions for the BBC.

The film will be followed by an opportunity to purchase the debut release of *The Nine Decades Volume 1 (1967-1968)*, the new CD by Ravi Shankar on his newly established East Meets West Music record label. Limited edition screen print posters made especially for this special event. All proceeds benefit the Ravi Shankar Foundation.

At 8 pm, the activities move to the Chicago Cultural Center’s Preston Bradley Hall, as three rising talents of Indian classical artists present a live concert in honor of the man who opened the door to the West for Indian music. Both Purbayan Chatterjee on sitar and Rakesh Chaurasia on flute studied in the Maiher Gharana, the same style or school as Shankar, and Yogesh Samsi on tabla studied with Ravi Shankar’s longtime drummer Ustad Alla Rakha.

This event is supported by the Ravi Shankar Institute for Music and Performing Arts (RIMPA) and the India Classical Music Society Chicago.

Concert Musicians

Purbayan Cahtterjee sounds like a musician who has been at the top of his profession for many years, such is the level of maturity and technical competence in his playing. In a very short time this young maestro has established himself as an artist of great invention. Like one of his mentors Ravi Shankar, Purbayan is poised to take the sitar to new heights, and like Shankar’s daughter Anoushka, Purbayan is carrying forward the Maihar Gharana style of sitar playing.

Like his legendary uncle, Pundit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Rakesh Chaurasia commands the Bansari flute with strength, dexterity, and serenity. While his roots are firmly classical, he has also blended the sounds of the hollow bamboo with melodies of jazz, film music, and Spanish guitar. Like sitar master Ravi Shankar, Rakesh also hails from the Maihar Gharana style of playing.

The son of the renowned vocalist Pandit Dinkar Kaikini, Yogesh Samsi was initiated into tabla by his father and Pandit H. Taranath Rao. However, it was under the gifted tutelage of Ravi Shankar's longtime and legendary drummer Ustad Alla Rakha that Yogesh received over 20 years of intense training and matured into one of those rare tabla players who shines as either accompaniment or soloists.

CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER

Originally built in 1897 as the Chicago's first central public library, the Chicago Cultural Center was established in 1991 as the nation's first and most comprehensive free municipal cultural venue by the City's Department of Cultural Affairs. Drawn by its beauty and abundant free public events, hundreds of thousands of visitors come to the Chicago Cultural Center every year, making it one of the most visited attractions in Chicago. The stunning landmark building is home to two magnificent stained-glass domes, as well as free music, dance and theater events, films, lectures, art exhibitions and family events. Visit www.chicagoculturalcenter.org or call 312.744.6630 for a complete schedule of events.

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