

# Rudraveena Concert

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## Program Details

The instrument Rudraveena is played to render music in the Dhrupad style. Dhrupad is one of the oldest forms of Indian classical music, from which over a period of time other forms of music have slowly evolved. The Dhrupad musical style is deeply contemplative, as it emerged from the melodies used for chanting sacred hymns. Its original purpose having been to take the mind into a deep inward journey, Dhrupad is sung or played in a style that develops the notes slowly and separately and tries to maintain the independence of each musical note in their individual capacity. Dhrupad therefore avoids fast movement between notes and quick glissandos. This is the main difference between Dhrupad and the more modern Khayal style, in which are played instruments like the Sitar and the Sarod.

Rudraveena is a rare musical instrument which has very few exponents owing the high degree of skill needed to master it. An instrument that is worn rather than held, the Rudraveena is draped crosswise across the body of artist with one resonator on the instrument directly touching the head of the musician, while the centre of its long body rests directly over his heart. The deep sonorous notes of its twin resonators are required to be complemented by the body of the musician breathing in a controlled fashion. Because of this very nature of the instrument it is in fact used by a class holy mendicants called the Naad Yogis who believe that its music can be used take the mind to a transcendental level.

A Rudraveena recital is based on a traditional Ragaa. A Ragaa is built around a set of fixed scales that are linked to a specific emotion, season or time of day. The recital has two distinct parts. The first, called Alaap, is played without the accompaniment any percussion instrument, and is used as a detailed musical introduction to the nature of the Ragaa. The second part is played with a bass percussion instrument such as the tabla, playing a variety of beat cycles, some of the popular ones being Chautaal in 12 beats, Sultal in 10 beats and Dhamaar in 14 beats. This portion that is played with the accompaniment of percussion has a fixed part that is based on the lyrical compositions of Dhrupad vocal music, sung in praise of gods and goddesses as well as festivals such as the Holi. After this follows a spontaneous exposition called the Taarparaan consisting of a variety of ornamental embellishments of the Raaga, played in accordance to the rendering system of the Rudraveena, including displays of a variety of rhythms as well as tempos structured within the framework of the beat cycle.