

## Tirtha

Pianist **Vijay Iyer** (VID-jay EYE-yer) introduces **Tirtha** (pronounced "TEER-tha"), an exciting and dynamic trio collaboration with two internationally renowned young Indian musicians living in the US. Pioneering guitarist **Prasanna** is a celebrated virtuoso of South Indian classical music as well as an accomplished composer in Western traditions. The prodigiously gifted tabla player **Nitin Mitta** has emerged rapidly as one of North America's most in-demand Indian percussionists. Performing original compositions by Iyer and Prasanna, the trio generates an astonishingly full ensemble sound, achieving a natural and organic synthesis of traditions. The result is a 21st-century global chamber music that is eminently listenable and vibrantly alive. Iyer says of this new project, "You can't call it fusion because we're not self-conscious about the ingredients. We're just drawing from who we are as citizens of the world."

Grammy-nominated composer-pianist **VIJAY IYER** (pronounced "VID-jay EYE-yer") was described by *Pitchfork* as "one of the best in the world at what he does," by *The New Yorker* as one of "today's most important pianists... extravagantly gifted... brilliantly eclectic," and by the *Los Angeles Weekly* as "a boundless and deeply important young star." He was voted the 2010 Musician of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association, and named one of the "50 Most Influential Global Indians" by *GQ India*. Iyer has released sixteen albums as a leader, most recently *Accelerando* (2012), an intense, visceral follow-up to the multiple-award-winning *Historicity* (2009), both featuring the Vijay Iyer Trio (Iyer, piano; Marcus Gilmore, drums; Stephan Crump, bass). *Historicity* was a 2010 Grammy Nominee for Best Instrumental Jazz Album, and was named #1 Jazz Album of the Year in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Detroit Metro Times*, National Public Radio, PopMatters.com, the *Village Voice* Jazz Critics Poll, and the *Downbeat* International Critics Poll. The trio won the 2010 Echo Award (the "German Grammy") for best international ensemble and the *Downbeat* Critics Poll for rising star small ensemble of the year. Iyer's many other honors include the Alpert Award in the Arts, the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, the 2012 Greenfield Prize and numerous composer commissions.



Iyer's many collaborators include his generation's fellow forward-thinkers Rudresh Mahanthappa, Rez Abbasi, Craig Taborn, Ambrose Akinmusire, Liberty Ellman, Steve Lehman and Tyshawn Sorey; elder avant-garde pioneers such as Steve Coleman, Roscoe Mitchell, Wadada Leo Smith, Butch Morris, George Lewis, and Amina Claudine Myers; new-music experimenters Miya Masaoka, Pamela Z, and John Zorn; hip-hop innovators Dead Prez, Das Racist, DJ Spooky, and High Priest of Antipop Consortium; South Asian percussionist-producers Karsh Kale, Suphala, and Talvin Singh; filmmakers Haile Gerima and Bill Morrison; choreographer Karole Armitage; and poets Mike Ladd, Amiri Baraka, Charles Simic, and Robert Pinsky. His concert works have been performed by the Ethel, JACK, and Brentano String Quartets, the Silk Road Ensemble, American Composers Orchestra, Hermès Ensemble, and Imani Winds.

A polymath whose career has spanned the sciences, the humanities and the arts, Iyer received an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in the cognitive science of music from the University of California, Berkeley. He has published articles in *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, *Wire*, *Music Perception*, *JazzTimes*, and *The Best Writing on Mathematics: 2010*. He was recently appointed Director of the Banff Centre's International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music, a program founded in 1974 by Oscar Peterson. Iyer is currently engaged in a multi-year residency with San Francisco Performances, performing and working with arts and community groups.

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In a world studded with brilliant guitarists, **'Prasanna'** plays like nobody on the planet' according to one Jazz critic. As a guitarist and composer, Prasanna's prolific body of work is as diverse as it is integrated. This includes over eleven Carnatic albums, the just released Carnatic/Rock Jimi Hendrix tribute album 'Electric Ganesha Land', a highly acclaimed Jazz Fusion album 'Be the Change' featuring several Grammy Award winning artists from the Jazz world, an eclectic solo guitar album 'Peaceful', a special triple guitar project 'Guitars' with the Belgian band Aka Moon, and numerous guitar tracks on multi-platinum Indian film soundtracks for such top composers as A.R. Rahman, Illayaraja and many more.

The North Sea Jazz Festival, Middelheim Jazz Festival, Festival Guitares Du Monde, La



Fete de la Musique, Les Orientales De St. Florent Le Vieil, Festival Jazz En Artois, PanaFest, Lotus world music festival are some of the top international festivals Prasanna has performed at. He has performed/recorded with legendary names in the Jazz/ Fusion world including Joe Lovano, Larry Coryell, Anthony Jackson, Omar Hakim, Victor Wooten, Airtto Moreira, Alphonso Johnson, Aka Moon, Trilok Gurtu, Steve Smith etc and from the Indian music world such as A.R.Rahman, Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Illayaraja, Dr. L. Subramaniam, Umayalpuram Sivaraman, Trichy Sankaran and several others.

Prasanna has composed original music for documentary films such as the **2009 Oscar nominated 'Smile Pinki'** and feature films such as 'Framed'. His original scores for contemporary dance theater include Shakespeare's 'Tempest' in Sydney, Australia, 'Sanaatana' in London, UK, 'A Story and a Song' in Boston, MA, 'Soliloquy' in Chennai, India and several more, His orchestration and arranging credits include the title score for the Oscar nominated Bollywood film 'Lagaan' with music composed by A.R. Rahman. Prasanna's acclaimed guitar instructional DVD 'Ragamorphism', gives an in-depth look at how he stretches the boundaries of improvisation.

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**Nitin Mitta** is one of the most sought after young tabla players of our generation with rare technical virtuosity and sensitivity. He has performed worldwide with some of India's most celebrated and honored musicians - such as Pt. Jasraj, Dr. Prabha Atre, Pt. Rajan Sajan Mishra, Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Smt. Veena Sahasrabudhe and Pt. Budhaditya Mukherjee just to name a few. Nitin received his early training in Hyderabad from Pandit G. Satyanarayana . In his years as a tabla-student, he won many accolades, including the first prize in the All India Competition held in Calcutta. He was also awarded a National Scholarship by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Central Govt. His passion for rhythm and his desire to enhance his repertoire of tabla-compositions, lead him to seek the guidance of Pandit Arvind Mulgaonkar. Both of Nitin's Gurus are disciples of the late Ustad Amir Hussain Khan Saheb, legendary doyen of the Farukhabad Gharana . Nitin has thus received two perspectives upon a single tradition and he has enriched his inheritance through his own capacity for assimilation and interpretation. On moving to the United States in 2002, Nitin received a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on Arts . He has been on the Faculty at the Learn Quest Academy of Music in



Waltham, MA . Now a resident of New York City, he is actively involved in teaching, performing, recording, and conducting tabla workshops. He has recently performed at venues like The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rubin Museum of Art, The Asia Society, and The Indian Embassy in New York and The Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC. He has also conducted lecture-demonstrations and performed at Brown University, MIT, Harvard, UC Berkeley, U Penn, The University of Chicago and Drury University. Nitin has performed in some of the major festivals and venues in India, the U.S. and in Canada, Germany, France, England, Ireland, Finland, Sri Lanka and the Baltic countries - Lithuania, Belarus, and Vilnius. He has performed at the Purcell Room, London and the India Culture Centre, Berlin. In India, he has performed at some of the most prestigious music festivals and venues, including The Pt. Motiram and Pt. Maniram Sangeeth Samaroh, Hyderabad, The Pt. Radhika Mohan Moitra Music conference, Kolkatta, Music Academy, Chennai, SPICMACAY, The St. Xavier's' IMG Music Festival, Mumbai, Surya Festival, Trivandrum, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi and the Nehru Centre, Mumbai. His performance in the musical album entitled "Soul Strings" released by Music Today has been widely appreciated.

[www.vijay-iyer.com](http://www.vijay-iyer.com)

<http://www.guitarprasanna.com/>

