

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 01/09/17



Talented British-Asian sitar player Roopa Panesar embarks on USA tour this September

Produced and managed by UK based Asian Arts Agency

We are excited to be touring British-Asian sitarist Roopa Panesar in the USA this September, as part of our international showcasing programme.

Following the success of Roopa's showcasing concerts in New York in January 2017, we have been busy planning this international tour, introducing her incredible talent to music fans across the USA.

For this tour, Roopa will be collaborating with British percussionist **Pirashanna Thevaraja** and tabla player **Nitin Mitta**.

Considered one of the finest sitar players on the Indian music scene, UK based Roopa Panesar is emerging as one of the most exciting young sitar players in the world. Her soulful and unique style of playing has been receiving accolades from audiences and peers alike for her outstanding ability and quality of music, which has left her listeners captivated.

For her US tour, Roopa will be adding a new dimension to her performances, collaborating with percussionists from North and South India (Carnatic music), bringing the unique musical traditions of both areas to the performances. The performances will also introduce unique Indian percussion instruments to audiences, including the mridangam, kanjira, ghatam and morsing, along with Indian spoken rhythm (Konnakol) and tabla.

US audiences will be able to experience this unique collaboration, fusing traditional Indian

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classical music from North and South, with Roopa's unique contemporary approach.

The tour will begin at the prestigious Lincoln Center in New York City on 7th September, with 7 dates scheduled across the USA.

TOUR CONCERT DATES:

7 September: Lincoln Center, New York City
8 & 9 September: World Music Festival, Chicago
10 September: SoFar Sounds – Private event
13 September: Landfall Festival, Cedar Rapids
16 September: Ramapo College, New Jersey
17 September: Storm King Museum, New York

TOUR WORKSHOP DATES:

12 September: Ragas, Sitar and Indian Percussions, Cedar Rapids
15 September: The Sitar: History, Music & Practice, Ramapo College
16 September: Indian Classical Music & Meditation, Ramapo College

Jaswinder Singh, Director of Asian Arts Agency said:

"We are very excited to be producing this North American international music tour with Roopa Panesar. This tour is a direct result of our showcasing activity in New York in January 2017. I am pleased that we have secured performances at some of the world class venues and festivals, including Lincoln Center in New York, Chicago World Music festival and Landfall Festival, Cedar Rapids.

The tour strengthens our export programme to international markets and will create further opportunities for future international touring and increased PR opportunities for our artists."

INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASING WORK

This showcasing tour continues the Agency's international touring programme, exporting and introducing British-Asian artists to new international markets.

As a result of the International Showcasing Grant awarded to Asian Arts Agency in July 2015, the Agency has embarked on a three-year plan of showcasing British-Asian talent across Europe, the US and India.

This tour follows the successful showcasing of British-Asian band The Dhol Foundation in January 2016, and the resulting 8-date North American tour, which the Agency produced and managed in September 2016.

For further information and images, please contact:

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ABOUT ASIAN ARTS AGENCY

Asian Arts Agency is a dynamic arts development agency based in Bristol that develops, promotes and supports international contemporary and traditional South Asian arts through performances, workshops, new commissions, tours, international showcasing and artist development.

As one of the UK's leading tour producers of contemporary South Asian music and arts, Asian Arts Agency has built a strong international, national and regional touring programme and a network of mainstream venues, festivals and promoters; bringing South Asian music and arts to communities in the UK and around the world.

asianartsagency.co.uk

ABOUT ROOPA PANESAR

Considered one of the finest sitar players to emerge on the Indian music scene, UK based **Roopa Panesar** is recognized as an emerging talent. Her soulful and unique style of playing has been receiving accolades from audiences and peers alike for her outstanding ability and quality of music, which has left her listeners captivated.

At the age of seven she began her training under the great educationalist and sitar maestro **Ustad Dharambir Singh MBE** and under the guidance of **Pandit Arvind Parikh** and **Ustad Shahid Parvez**.

With the incredible emotional depth of her sound, she has touched the hearts of audiences far and wide touring extensively in the UK and Europe at major festivals and venues such as *WOMAD UK, Royal Festival Hall London, BBC Radio 3, Brighton Festival, Darbar Festival at South Bank Centre, Birmingham Symphony Hall and Colston Hall, Bristol*.

Roopa has collaborated with artists from many different genres, including Mercury Prize winner Talvin Singh, Laura Wright and Dirk Brosse, Belgian Symphony Orchestra, Limburg Symphony Orchestra, German Chamber Music Festival, and with music director Rob Lane for the soundtrack of the film 'West is West'. Rob Lane adds, '*Roopa's sitar playing on "West Is West" added immeasurably to my score and showed effortless versatility in moving between blues and classical Indian styles*'.

'British-Indian sitar player Roopa Panesar and her band were outstanding' – **The Independent**

"Sitar star Roopa Panesar, from Leicester, captivated in the wooded arena, her music the perfect soundtrack" – **The Guardian**

'Roopa Panesar stole the show with her graceful and seductive solo Sitar' – **The First Draft**

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ABOUT PIRASHANNA THEVARAJAH

Pirashanna Thevarajah is a senior disciple of **Mridanga vidwan Sri. M. Balachandar**.

A versatile performer, he is one of the few percussionists of his generation to have a command of the various Indian percussion instruments such as the mridangam, kanjira, ghatam and morsing; and is also proficient in the art of konnakol (Indian spoken rhythm).

He has collaborated and performed with many of the world's foremost Indian classical and contemporary musicians, including *Pandit Ravi Shankar, Anoushka Shankar, Dr M. Balamuralikrishna, Mandolin U. Shrinivas, Talvin Singh* and many others.

His busy schedule has taken him to many venues and festivals across Europe, India, the USA and Canada. Pirashanna has featured on many albums and movies, including Anoushka Shankar's Grammy nominated albums *Traveller* and *Traces of You*.

tpirashanna.com

ABOUT NITIN MITTA

Nitin Mitta, based in New York, is one of the most sought after tabla players of his generation. Apart from being a dynamic soloist, he is a highly sought after accompanist who has performed with some of India's most celebrated Hindustani classical musicians, including *Pandit Jasraj, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Pandits Rajan and Sajan Mishra, Pandit Janardan Mitta, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Pandit Budhaditya Mukherjee, Ustad Shahid Parvez and Ustad Nishat Khan* to name a few.

Born and brought up in Hyderabad, India, Nitin received his early training in tabla at the age of 9 from **Pandit G. Satyanarayana**. After winning the First prize in the All India competition and the National Scholarship for music, Nitin continued his further training in tabla under the distinguished teacher **Pandit Arvind Mulgaonkar** of Mumbai. Both of Nitin's gurus are disciples of the late **Ustad Amir Hussain Khan**, legendary doyen of the Farukhabad Gharana.

Nitin maintains a busy schedule of performances and tabla workshops, traveling throughout the U.S, Europe, Canada and India. He has performed at several prominent venues, including the *Weill Recital Hall* and the *Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center* and *The Metropolitan Museum of Art* in New York. He has also performed at many of the major music festivals in India, including the *Pandit Motiram and Pandit Maniram Sangeet Samaroh* in Hyderabad, the *Harivallabh Sangeet Samaroh* in Jalandhar and the *Music Academy Venue* in Chennai.

'A wakeful, radiant performance, suffused with a tricky tranquillity.' – **NY Times**

'Bewitching... takes listeners to places they've never heard.' – **LA Times**

nitinmitta.com