Zakir Hussain, Dave Holland, Shankar Mahadevan, Louiz Banks and Sanjay Divecha

Crosscurrents

Tues, Oct 6 at 8pm
Royce Hall

RUNNING TIME
Approximately two and a half hours including one intermission

ABOUT THE PROGRAM
“The influence of Indian classical music on jazz is widely known. Less known, however, is the influence of jazz on the popular music of India. Jazz first came to India by way of the Hollywood musicals of the 1930’s and 40’s and quickly influenced the music of India’s burgeoning film industry. The improvisational nature of jazz was familiar to Indian composers and musicians who found a way to incorporate jazz harmonies and chord progressions into their work. As a few decades passed, and as the West was enjoying the inspiration of Indian classical music, certain musicians came to influence popular music in India in a big way. Among these are jazz pianist Louiz Banks ... and superstar composer/vocalist Shankar Mahadevan. The great bassist Dave Holland, a player with one of the most distinguished careers in jazz, brings his singular vision. The ensemble pays tribute to pioneering musicians and composers on opposite sides of the world who built a bridge which could be traversed in both directions.” – Zakir Hussain

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Zakir Hussain, Tabla
Dave Holland, Bass
Shankar Mahadevan, Vocals
Louiz Banks, Keyboards
Sanjay Divecha, Guitar
V. Selvaganesh, Drums

A classical tabla virtuoso of the highest order, Hussain’s consistently brilliant and exciting performances have established him as a national treasure in India and a cultural ambassador worldwide. Zakir’s contribution to world music is highlighted by many historic collaborations, including Shakti, which he founded with John McLaughlin and L. Shankar, the Diga Rhythm Band, Making Music, Planet Drum with Mickey Hart, Tabla Beat Science, Sangam with Charles Lloyd and Eric Harland, and recordings and performances with artists as diverse as George Harrison, Yo-Yo Ma, Joe Henderson, Van Morrison, Airta Moreira, Pharoah Sanders, Billy Cobham, Mark Morris, Rennie Harris, and the Kodo drummers.
MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER:

A crosscurrent can be multiple things—a perpendicular path intersecting our trajectory, a view toward another destination, an opposing force, a path of difference or even valuable resistance.

Crosscurrents are a powerful tool in the existence and evolution of great art. Obstacles, changes, challenges, new directions and paths can be objects of expression for great artists whose hearts and minds are open to driving forward into a multitude of currents, to welcoming the forces of nature that wend and wind their way into a particular path.

Tonight, we capture a crosscurrent. This entirely new project is an excursion into the expansive possibilities of cross-cultural musical languages that have been created and continue to evolve thanks to the globally minded artists who are about to take this stage.

On this side of the current we often recognize and celebrate the influence of India’s great artists on the quintessential American art form of jazz. What Zakir Hussain and company intend to do on stage tonight is to also celebrate the influence of jazz on Indian music and culture—the artistic tributary that flooded into the country decades ago via Hollywood cinema.

Jazz is indeed a universal language, with a vernacular that winds and flows like a current.

Zakir Hussain is our guide for this unique performance experience. His first concert in Royce hall was in 1970 and he has been here many times since then.

Thank you for joining us on the latest exploration.

Dave Holland, Bass

English-born Dave Holland took up the acoustic double bass after being inspired by Ray Brown. He spent two formative years playing for Miles Davis in the band that recorded Filles de Kilimanjaro, In a Silent Way, and Bitches Brew. In 2002 he debuted his Big Band, which led to Grammys and victories in the Down Beat Critics Poll as Acoustic Bassist of the Year and Musician of the Year. Over the course of a nearly five-decade career, Holland has exemplified the evolutionary process in musical form, reinventing his concept and approach with each new project while constantly honing his instantly identifiable voice. From the electric whirlwind of Davis’ Bitches Brew-era band to the avant-garde quartet Circle alongside Chick Corea, Anthony Braxton, and Barry Altschul; Dave Holland has been at the forefront of jazz in many of its forms since his earliest days.

Shankar Mahadevan, Vocals

Mahadevan is a perfect representative of modern India – he began his professional life in the tech world, including a stint as a software engineer for Oracle. But music called to him, and soon after he recorded his first album, Breathless, he came to the attention of India’s film industry. Mahadevan has been the singing voice of every hero in Tamil cinema, working with many celebrated composers—including A.R. Rahman—and winning several National Film Awards. He has become a leading composer in Indian film music, selling millions of records every year and earning international critical acclaim.

Louiz Banks (keyboards) has been nicknamed the “Godfather of Indian Jazz.” His commitment and devotion to jazz convinced his father to change his son’s name in honor of Louis Armstrong. His work (co-producer, arranger, and pianist) on Miles from India brought his name to great recognition in America, receiving a Grammy nomination.

Sanjay Divecha (guitar) is a performer and composer based out of Mumbai, India. He was recently featured on the background score of the 2010 Danny Boyle film, 127 Hours, which paired him with A.R Rahman and received multiple Academy Award nominations, including ‘Best Original Score’.

V. Selvaganesh (drums) was born in Chennai to Grammy-winner T.H. “Vikku” Vinayakram, a legendary musician and also a former member of John McLaughlin’s original Shakti. He began his concert career at the age of 10 and established his right to be on the stage by playing with such dexterity that he was soon accompanying many famous vocalists in Carnatic music at the time.