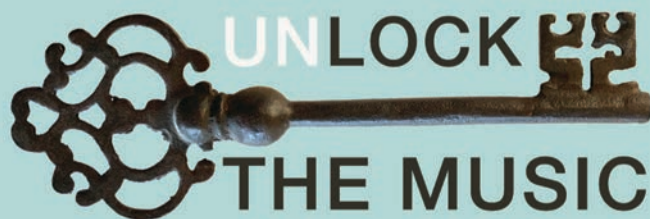


SHUBHENDRA AND SASKIA RAO PRESENT

An e-Baithak Series With Live & Virtual Audience



DEDICATED TO
BHARAT RATNA PANDIT RAVI SHANKAR

31st October
21st November
19th December
23rd January
20th February
20th March

Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar
Pandit Debashish Bhattacharya
Dr. Sonal Mansingh
Pandit Shubhendra Rao & Saskia Rao-de Haas
Pandit Madhup Mudgal
Pandit Pravin Godkhindi

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE
MINISTRY OF CULTURE & INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS

Introduction to 'Unlock the Music- e-baithak series

A baithak is a concert in traditional Indian setting where everyone sits on the floor. There is a close interaction between the artist and the audience. Baithaks were previously held at the royal courts, houses of noblemen and the zamindars. Nowadays, many people organize a baithak at their homes too.

'Unlock the Music' is an e-baithak music series organized by artist couple Pandit Shubhendra and Saskia Rao. They welcome you to their house to 6 concerts over the next 6 months, which is open to a very small live so that the artist performs not just to a camera but to an audience in an intimate setting. This concert will be streamed to a worldwide audience that can experience the concerts and interactive session by signing up to access the live stream. A post-concert Q & A with the artists will be an added feature that will enable audiences from all around the world to interact with these legendary artists and an educational package is available for the audience that wants to understand more about the music.

Indian Classical music prides itself on an age old tradition in lineage that dates back to over 2500 years. The importance of audience is perhaps best expressed in a treatise by Abhinavgupta in the 10th century. He describes the perfect audience as a 'spotless mirror' that can capture the essence of the music. This understanding of music takes place at different levels. Music flows from one soul to the other and helps us in these trying times.

With each concert, we give you an e-book as a guide to each concert of "Unlock the Music" series to explain more about the music and artist. We also have a student version available for the books.

For this month's e-book, we are so happy to present the wonderful Pandit Debashish Bhattacharya.

If you have any questions for the artists, about 'Unlock the Music' series or learning music in general, write to us at admin@sangeet4all.com.

We would love to hear from you!





Guitar wizard **PANDIT DEBASHISH BHATTACHARYA** is a legend of slide guitar. From the age of four, a child's fancy with a Hawaiian guitar evolved into creating new guitars and his unique playing style has mesmerized audiences and connoisseurs for over 4 decades.

Debashish continues the lineage of his Gurus, Pandit Brij Bhushan Kabra, Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty and Late Ustad Ali Akbar Khan in performance and inspiration.

He has been featured in Billboard Top 10, Songlines Magazine Top 10, Central Asia and Asia Pacific World Music Top 10, Amazon Top 100 albums, National Geography and world's who's who enlisted artiste. He won the 2016 Song Lines Music Award and is a 2002 and 2009 Grammy Nominee, 2007 BBC Planet Award, 2005 Asiatic Society Gold medal, 1984 President of India Gold medal.

Pandit Debashish Bhattacharya's composed numerous world music collaborations and cross cultural bridges. This approach has attracted global legends like **American Dobro Guitarists 12 times Grammy winner Jerry Douglas, African Kora Legend Ballake Sissoko, Jazz Guitar Legend John McLaughlin, Moroccan Oud legend Driss el Maloumi, American Bluesman Bob Brozman, British Singer Martin Simpson, Australian Rocker John Butler American Rocker Henry Kaiser, Indian legends Ustad Zakir Hussain, Pt Ravi Shankar and Many others.**

Debashish provides support to 6 guitar Luthier families of Bengal to sell and manufacture his patented instruments globally. He has taught innumerable guitarists across the world who continue his musical lineage.

Debashish Bhattacharya, the worthy disciple of **Pandit Brij Bhushan Kabra**, modified and adopted the Hawaiian guitar to suit Indian classical music. With love and devotion, he mastered all that was possible within its framework and his inherent creative nature made him naturally adept in this musical creation. Indian music, which thrives on improvisation, gave him all these possibilities but the instrument that is more suited for Western music, tied his hands at times. Keeping intact the original sound of guitar, he yearned to blend the tonal resonance of majestic traditional Indian instruments.



He experimented by blending tones of **Rudra-veena**, **Violin**, **Sarod** and the **Sitar** into **Chaturangui** - one instrument with four colours and the first of the Trinity of Guitars.

During one of his trips to Puri, Debashish was savouring the beauty of the famous sea beach. The restless inventor in him found the high rising waves like his own restless soul. But when it touched the sky at its meeting point in the horizon, Debashish found that there was nothing but peace and beauty.



This led to the creation of **Gandharvi** - the rendezvous of bass and treble representing the restless earth and overpowering sky; the birth place of the celestial beauty belonging to Gandharva Loka. Melting the golden tones of Saraswathi-veena, Santoor, Sarangi and the acoustics of 12- string-guitar into one mould and reshaping it into the second of the Trinity of guitars achieved this.

Think about this: What would you like to ask Pandit ji about his instruments?
Write your questions to: admin@sangeet4all.com

During the ancient period, the Khitara was already a popular instrument, but we don't know much about it. All over the world we can find remains of old lutes as old as in Egypt and Mesopotamia. However, the guitar originated in Spain in the late 15th century. Originally the Baroque guitar, as this guitar was called, had only 4 or 5 strings and each string was doubled to increase the volume.

Listen to the guitar of that time here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-mfvMLrY28>



It was in the late 18th century that the guitar got its 6 single strings and its characteristic tuning. The instrument became more popular and classical virtuoso guitarists travelled around the world to perform. The most famous Classical Spanish guitarist of the 20th century who followed in the footsteps of these great artists was Andre Segovia. Listen to him playing here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICeebWgjrU>

The earliest Spanish settlers brought the guitar with them to the Americas. However it became popular only in the 19th century. Initially in the Southern part, the instrument made its mark. The guitar became a leading instrument in Blues music that originated from the music by slaves and was a mix of work songs, African music and spirituals. The Blues is at the heart of the development of Jazz and popular music in the 20th century and even today, we can feel its influence in pop music. Listen to one the greatest Blues guitarists: BB King:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWLAzOBoBI>



The guitar also became an important instrument in country music. The soft sounding gut or nylon strings were replaced with steel strings to create more volume. The earliest experiments with electric guitars started in 1927 to create a guitar that could play with louder instruments. In 1957 the first Fender electric guitar was made.

To think about: Listen to the music links. Which one did you like best? In what country did the guitar originate? Name a Spanish guitarist and a Blues guitarist.

In the early 1830s, Mexican cattle herders brought the guitar to the islands of Hawai'i. There the famous Hawai'iian guitar was developed and later came to India.

Joseph Kekukuupenaokamehamehakanaiapuni Apuakehau, who shortened his stage name to Kekuku, is credited with the invention of the Hawaiin guitar in 1885. It is said he laid a guitar across his lap and moved the back of metal comb across the frets to create the special sound of the Hawaiian steel guitar. He left Hawai'i in 1930 to never return to his homeland, but influenced guitarists from all over the world. He was the main influence on another Hawaiin guitarist, Tau Moe who introduced India to the Hawaiin slide guitar.



Tau Moe and his wife Rose Moe, a well known singer with their Hawaiian Band EMMI lived in Kolkata (Calcutta) from 1941-47 during which period, they made many recordings and toured extensively around Asia. Tau Moe's star student in India was Mr. Garney Nyss who became India's leading Slide Guitar artist. The first artist credited to play classical music on the slide guitar is Shri Nalin Mazumdar, a disciple of Baba Allaaddin Khan, founder of the Maihar gharana.

Tau Moe felicitated by Pt Debashish Bhattacharya

The fifties and early sixties saw popularity of the steel Hawaiian guitar grow in Kolkata. However, it was mainly used in popular music, film music and light classical. It was initially not seen as suitable for the demands of classical Raga music until the work of Pandit Brij Bhushan Kabra who as a young man would make his mark in Hindutani Classical music.



A disciple of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, he raised the playing standard of the Indian slide guitar to concert level. Listen to his famous collaboration 'Call of the Valley' with Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia and Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1zzVqrCEeU>



Another artist who made important contributions to classical Indian slide guitar is Padma Bhushan Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt. A disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar, he created the Mohan Veena and won the Grammy award in 1994 for his collaborative album 'Meeting by the River' with American slide guitarist Ry Cooder. Listen to their music here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nZYejNVZn0>

To think about: Where is the Indian slide guitar from? Apart from Debashish Bhattacharya, name two more Indian Classical guitarists.

Read about Guitar:

Websites:

1. <http://www.debashishbhattacharya.com/bsum/>. This wonderful website gives detailed information about the artist, his inspiration and work. It also describes the journey of the Hawaiian guitar to India and served as the main source for this e-book.
2. There are many wonderful websites for guitarists. Indian classical, Classical Spanish, Flamenco, Blues, Country, Rock.... The list is endless.

These articles were some of the the sources for information in this e-book

1. Who invented the Electric Guitar? <https://www.all-guitars.co.uk/who-invented-the-electric-guitar/>
2. Classical Guitar Magainz.com has many interesting articles on guitar
3. <http://www.debashishbhattacharya.com/interviews.php>

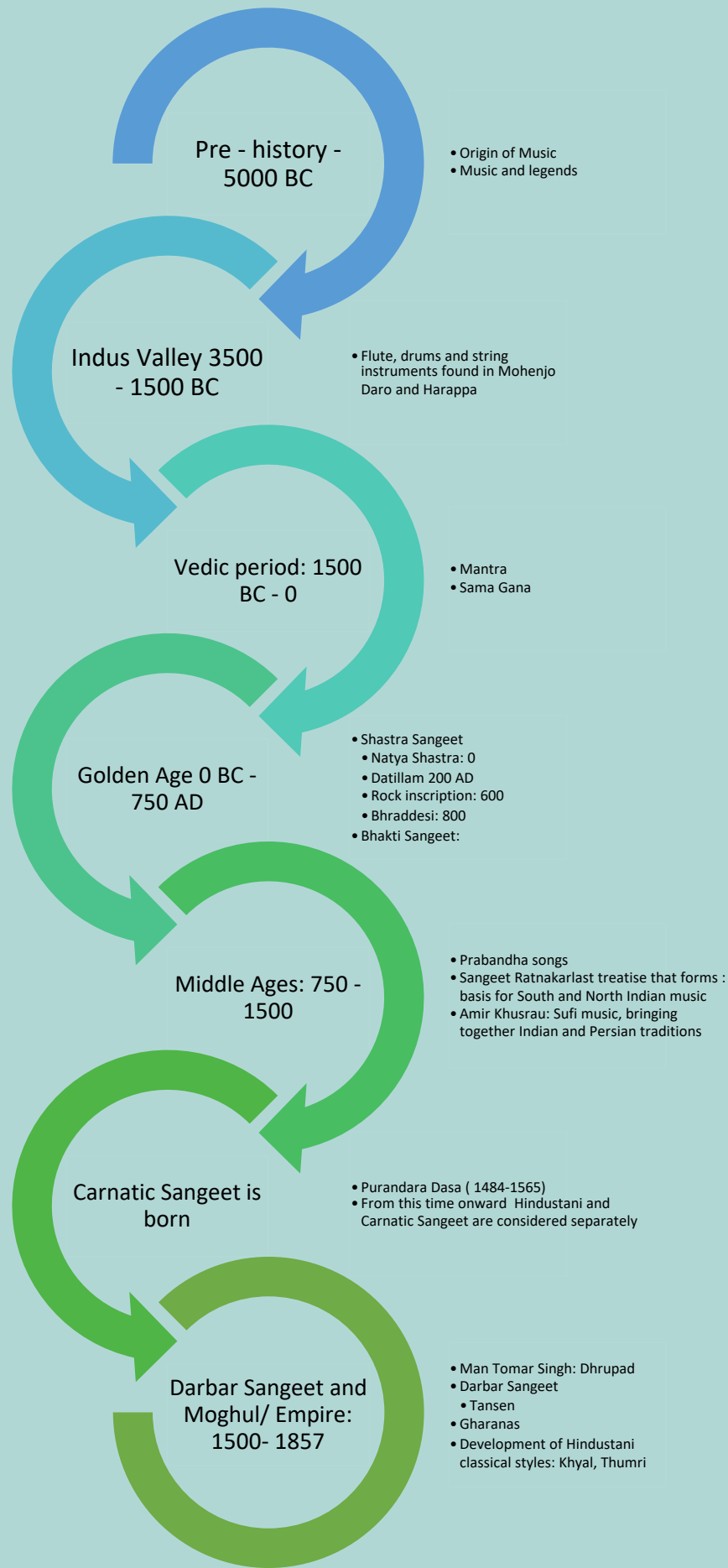
Learn to play Indian slide Guitar yourself:

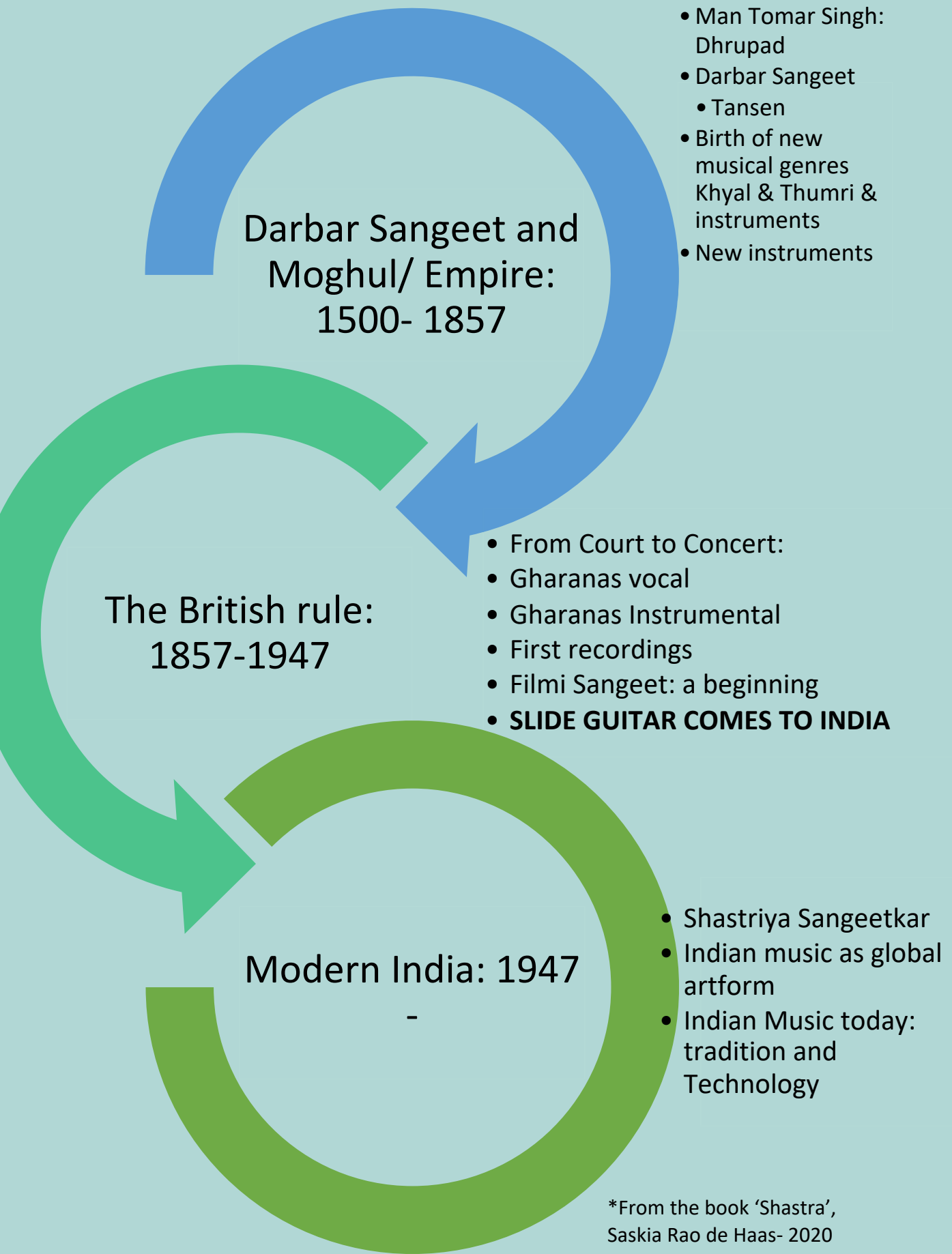
The guitar is perhaps the most popular instrument today, but not many have been able to play Indian classical music on this versatile instrument. It is good to know that even during the pandemic, many Gurus today teach online so that you can learn even now. Everyone can learn music and benefit from the thorough musical foundation that the study of Classical music provides. If you are interested in learning Indian music on the guitar, you can contact us and we can connect you with a Guru in your area.

If you want to learn from Pandit Debashish Bhattacharya directly, you can contact him directly:
info@debashishbhattacharya.com



Pandit Debashish Bhattacharya

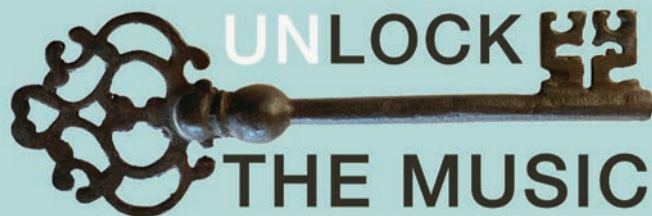




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Next concert

Padma Vibushan and Rajya Sabha Member

Dr Sonal Mansingh

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