

STRINGS FOR PEACE – Sharon Isbin, Amjad Ali Khan

Videos:

Audio excerpts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFsgxp43JPA>

Interview & performance:

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

Hindustan Times Cover Story:

<https://www.sharonisbin.com/hindustantimes2019.pdf>

Photos:

Strings for Peace Album cover:

https://sharonisbin.com/press/stringsforpeace_cd_zoho.jpg

Strings for Peace:

https://sharonisbin.com/press/isbin-khan-bangash_sfp.jpg

Album information:

https://www.zohomusic.com/cds/isbin_stringsforpeace.html

Acclaim

“Crossed barriers of language, culture, uniting people through music and melody...The power of their performance rocked the hall.”

Times of India

“A remarkable spiritual and emotional journey ... Sharing the great unique treasures of their own artistic traditions ... Combining the guitar and sarod results in an extraordinary blend.”

Rolling Stone

BEST MUSIC OF 2020 “I also love the dialogue back and forth between Sharon’s guitar and Ayaan’s sarod...It’s HIGHLY sensual, both in a spiritual way and in a kind of sexy way!”

NPR All Songs Considered

“Seasoned musicians who are at the top of their game, working to bring their musical worlds closer together. Reminiscent of partnerships in the past—remember John McLaughlin and Shakti, Yehudi Menuhin and Ravi Shankar, the Beatles, and others—this is music worth hearing!”

American Record Guide

BEST OF 2020 “A spectacular collaboration exploring North Indian classical music ... melody, mystique and mood all wrapped up in an hour-long virtuosic journey ... at once calming and exciting, brilliant ... like so many beautiful sunrises...”

Audiophile Review

“Absolutely stunning, with all five musicians leaving the audiences enthralled.”

Hindustan Times

“A first of its kind truly spectacular international music experience!”

The Asian Age

Biography

Strings for Peace is steeped in the tradition of ragas and talas of North Indian classical music with sarod master Amjad Ali Khan, his virtuoso sons Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash, and guitarist Sharon Isbin. *The Times of India* said about the 2019 tour “[the musicians] crossed barriers of language, culture, uniting people through music and melody ... the power of their performance rocked the hall!” The recording was released in 2020 where it debuted at number 3 on the Amazon Hot New Releases/World Music bestseller list and rose to number 2 in its first week.

“The sarod and the guitar belong to a common family of stringed musical instruments. Through this collaboration, we strive to preserve the essence of both Indian and Western traditions so they can flow into each other without artistic compromise. Each of the artists brings the spirit of sharing the great unique treasures of their own artistic traditions, as well as finding common ground in Ragas and Medieval modes. The idea is to achieve a cross-fertilization at both the cellular and cosmic levels of two classical music traditions, which are often held to be radically different. This is a blissful dream of a project, infused with the unique amalgamated contributions of artists united under a common aegis, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, cultures, traditions, generations, genders, religions, upbringing, and career paths.” *Amjad Ali Khan*

“It is an honor and joy to perform *Strings for Peace*! The music Amjad Ali Khan has composed for guitar and sarod is sheer genius, and I don’t use this term lightly. In an amazing way, it interweaves our varied musical, spiritual and artistic traditions with mystical beauty, creativity, grace and great emotion.” *Sharon Isbin*

Program

SPANISH WORK FOR SOLO GUITAR

Sharon Isbin

AMJAD ALI KHAN: SACRED EVENING

Ayaan Ali Bangash and Sharon Isbin
AMJAD ALI KHAN: BY THE MOON
Amaan Ali Bangash and Sharon Isbin
Raga and Folk Music
Amjad Ali Khan
AMJAD ALI KHAN: Romancing Earth
Full Ensemble

Subject to change.

News



News about

Sharon Isbin, Amjad Ali Khan & Strings For Peace

Sharon Isbin Releases “Strings for Peace” with Amjad Ali Khan

***Strings for Peace* with Sharon Isbin and Sarod Masters Amjad Ali Khan and Ayaan Ali Bangash.**

Multiple Grammy Award winner **Sharon Isbin**, who has been acclaimed for expanding the guitar repertoire with some of the finest new works of our time, sarod master **Amjad Ali Khan** and his virtuoso sons **Amaan** and **Ayaan Ali Bangash** have released a new world premiere recording on ZOHO. ***Strings for Peace*** (ZM 202004), an album steeped in the tradition of ragas and talas of North Indian classical music, is a groundbreaking release that vastly enriches major new repertoire for guitar.

Strings for Peace, features four compositions by legendary sarod master Amjad Ali Khan based on four popular ragas specifically written and arranged for Sharon Isbin: **By the Moon – Raga Behag**, **Love Avalanche – Raga Mishra Bhairav**, **Romancing Earth – Raga Pilu** and **Sacred Evening – Raga Yaman**. The four artists are accompanied on the tabla by Amit Kavthekar, a disciple of two giants of Indian drumming, Alla Rakha and his son Zakir Hussain. Isbin calls the music Amjad Ali Khan composed for guitar and sarod “sheer genius,” adding, “in an amazing way, it interweaves our varied musical, spiritual and artistic traditions with mystical beauty, creativity, grace and great emotion.” The *Times of India*, in reviewing their recent tour, raved

how the musicians “crossed barriers of language, culture, uniting people through music and melody ... the power of their performance rocked the hall!” This sense of unity and oneness is all the more poignant given that Delhi is experiencing its worst sectarian mob violence in decades.

Strings for Peace debuted at number 3 on the Amazon Hot New Releases/World Music bestseller list and rose to number 2 in its first week.

[Listen to the Gramophone podcast interview with Sharon Isbin.](#)

[Listen to the Strings For Peace feature on New Classical Tracks from MPR.](#)

[Listen to Elliott Forrest interview Sharon Isbin on WQXR.](#)

[Read the feature in Guitar Girl Magazine.](#)

[Read the feature in Acoustic Guitar Magazine.](#)

Critical Acclaim:

“I also love the dialogue back and forth between Sharon’s guitar and Ayaan’s sarod...It’s HIGHLY sensual, both in a spiritual way and in a kind of sexy way!”
(5-minute feature starts at 25:26)

“Love Avalanche” a cool East-meets-West raga featuring multiple Grammy-winning classical guitarist Sharon Isbin paired with the Indian sarod master Ayaan Ali Bangash.”

[NPR Music’s No. 1 Albums And Songs Of May](#)

“Though the overall character is distinctly Indian, Isbin’s guitar fits in perfectly, soaring expressively in her many spotlight turns (both fast and slow), playing in unison with the sarod, or “answering” sarod lines. Her virtuosity and obvious comfort in this setting allow the guitar to be an equal partner in this fascinating and completely satisfying fusion of Indian and Western styles. Check it out!”

[Classical Guitar Magazine \(Best of 2020\)](#)

“Here is a recording of seasoned musicians who are at the top of their game, working to bring their musical worlds closer together. Reminiscent of partnerships in the past—remember John McLaughlin and Shakti, Yehudi Menuhin and Ravi Shankar, the Beatles, and others—this is music worth hearing!...Isbin plays her classical, fretted nylon string guitar, its sound contrasting with the steel strings of the unfretted Indian sarod. The music is played in a traditional Indian style, with tabla accompaniment and a droning, electronic tanpura, and includes sections of theme, improvisation, players echoing each other’s lines, and exciting, rapid scale passages in unison and octaves. While the sarod players improvise (and they are excellent!) Isbin offers an appropriate, simple accompaniment pairing with the tanpura. She does not, herself, improvise, leaving that to the others. This is convincing music, and an application of classical guitar which to this reviewer’s ears is unique, from a musician who has had a great deal of experience playing with percussionist Thiago de Mello and musicians who routinely improvise, including Steve Vai and Stanley Jordan. The album was named *Strings for Peace* a year ago, originating from a

genuine desire to unite different cultures. Listen to this; the warmth of the relationship between Isbin and the family of Amjad Ali Khan comes through clearly.”

[American Record Guide](#)

BEST OF 2020 “A wonderful cross-cultural release...A spectacular collaboration exploring North Indian classical music ... melody, mystique and mood all wrapped up in an hour-long virtuosic journey ... at once calming and exciting, brilliant ... like so many beautiful sunrises ... Fantastic fidelity...”

[Audiophile Review](#)

BEST OF 2020 Deep Roots “Innovative Grammy-winning guitarist Sharon Isbin has just released a new recording that not only pushes cultural musical barriers and stereotypes, but breaks them down entirely. Isbin is joined here by iconic sarod master, Amjad Ali Khan and his talented sons, Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash. Noted drummer/tabla player Amit Kavthekar, adds his considerable talents to both the intensity and the beauty of the repertoire...Isbin’s sibilant and precise guitar work is the perfect complement for Khan’s ancient sarod – both in timbre and tone. Of special note are *By the Moon*, in which languid, dreamy drone tones conjure up the magic and mystery of the moon’s esoteric power; in contrast, *Love Avalanche* is a rousing, rhythmic celebration, involving an intricate and melodic musical conversation between Isbin and Khan. The irresistible *Sacred Evening* is an experience of gentle, fragile beauty as well as a dip into the eternal sea of oneness that we are all a part of.”

[The Whole Note](#)

“I can tell you that if you’re seeking music both emotional and inspiring, you will love “Raga Mishra Bhairav” (*Love Avalanche*)... in addition to Sharon’s enchanting guitar work, you will also hear Amjad Ali Khan, sarod; Amaan Ali Bangash, sarod; Ayaan Ali Bangash, sarod and Amit Kavthekar, tabla...The gentle approach on the opening sonic salvo, “Raga Behag” (*By The Moon*), made it my personal favorite of the four (long) ragas offered up for your spiritual enlightenment and sonic joy... if any music can inspire unity – it is this piece... you will find yourself listening to this tune over and over again. I give all the players a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED rating, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) score of 4.99 for this very enjoyable music.”

[Contemporary Fusion Reviews](#)

Strings for Peace: “In what is probably her most indie record ever, La Isbin strays about as far a field from the world of classical guitar as you can imagine with this set of specially composed ragas from an immanent raga family. With a light enough touch to make this not feel like a tour through an opium den, it’s a first class trip to the mysterious east where you just don’t know what’s beyond the next turn but you can’t stop pushing forward. Out of the ordinary but totally hot throughout.”

[Midwest Record](#)

“The sarod and the Spanish guitar are both plucked stringed instruments that have a “shared gypsy heritage that evolved many years ago”. But one is fretted and more suited for polyphonic harmonisation, while the other is unfretted and produces a more contiguous sound conducive to raga-based melodic exposition. How do you make them work together? Well, Isbin’s slides and

melismatic filigree natural to the guitar create a virtual bridge. And when the sarod leads, Sharon chips in with chords and bass notes that flavour each spoonful of the melody with a fresh spice. The chordal backdrop hardly distorts the raag, instead playfully asking each note, 'What if I dressed you in these ornaments today?' The note seldom demurs."

[The Hindu](#)

"A remarkable spiritual and emotional journey ... Sharing the great unique treasures of their own artistic traditions ... Combining the guitar and sarod results in an extraordinary blend."

Rolling Stone

"Extraordinary guitarist Sharon Isbin delivers some fantastic music ... It seems to be tapping into something timeless and beautiful and powerful ... uniting us with each other and with the planet itself."

New Jazz Releases

"Exotic and hypnotic swirl of moods, tempos, string modulations and colorful intertwinings ... A constantly engaging aural feast to behold, the ebb and flow of the strings is fascinating, buoyed along by the seductive grounding and grooving percussion ... A realm where cultures can discover common ground and create a more peaceful world, starting with music."

JD Vibe

"Isbin has chosen to follow the route originally pioneered by Yehudi Menuhin in exploring and collaborating with South Asian musicians, reaping the joy of collaboration. The end result enhances both. Here we have master sarod player, Amjad Ali Khan and his very accomplished sons, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash. They are dazzlingly accompanied by tabla player Amit Kavthekar ... Lucid and a joy to the ears ... The music has a joyous directness that comes from performers who have mastered their craft."

New Music Buff

"Emotive and lovely ... Isbin plays flawlessly here, and the players are equally impressive on this cultured, powerful and meticulous take on classical Indian music that will absolutely enthrall fans of world music."

Take Effect Reviews

"Magnificent musical experience"

Carlini CD Reviews

"Lustre and subtlety ... masterfully orchestrated."

New York Music Daily

**** (4 Stars) "The musicians demonstrate a visceral understanding of how music connects us all on this planet. Performances of deep feeling and mystical splendor that emphasize the need for peace, harmony and understanding."

Roots Music Report

“Magnificent Sarod and Guitar Interchange. Strings for Peace is a fabulous set of four ragas composed by Indian sarod maestro Amjad Ali Khan for guitarist Sharon Isbin ... Beautiful, evocative pieces showcase the marvelous interplay between the sarod and the classical guitar.”
World Music Central

“Shimmering, thoughtful and poignant”
All About Jazz

“Marco Polo and Mastermind of a Silk Road Project Of Her Own. The guitar phenomenon Sharon Isbin, who knows no borders ... ambitious exotica redolent of India and China ... silken blend of Western and darkly sensuous Hindustani sonorities.”
BeyondCriticism

“Romancing Earth with Amjad on sarod is gloriously stately ... This is a groundbreaking record!”
Songlines Magazine

“Sophisticated and lively ... hypnotic and exciting”