



Ramanan Venkatraman with the Hansaveena

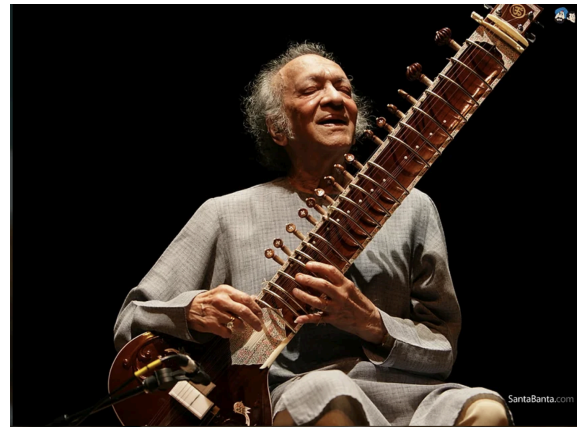
.-*Highlights*-.

- Strong lineage (Senia Maihar Gharana)
- Unique rare instrument (Hansaveena)
- Mellifluous sound production
- Young vibrant personality
- Dedicated and devoted to the parampara
- Striking tonal quality
- Brilliant confluence with any Indian classical percussion
- Diverse range and variety of music
- Performing the world over

.-*About Ramanan*-.

Ramanan is a senior disciple of Pandit Barun Kumar Pal and has trained in the true Guru Shishya Parampara. On many occasions he has given various performances with the guidance and love from his Guru. The style of playing would mostly be termed as the Senia Maihar Gharana Style, however, Ramanan says that it is his Guru's style, which includes everything from the Gharana added with his (Guruji's) immense musical sense and awareness of a slide instrument that makes it vividly unique. Apart from being a Classical Musician, Ramanan is also an accomplished western music composer, multi-instrumentalist, audio engineer and music producer. This allows him to have the most unique edge, which helps in bringing out unconventional and innovative melodies. Ramanan aspires to be capable enough to walk on the path of his Guru and is determined to promote and propagate his Guru's hard work and struggle of the Hansaveena to the world.

.-*Lineage*.-



[Acharya Baba Allaiddin Khan Sahab \(Top Left Image\)](#) was a Sarod & Violin Player from Maihar. One of his most revered and well known disciples was [Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar \(Top Right Image\)](#) who became the legendary ambassador of Indian Classical Music all around the world. Pandit Ravi Shankar's senior disciples and personally close disciple was **Guru Barun Kumar Pal (Bottom Center Image)** who was a Slide Guitar Player, later to become the pioneer and propagator of the Hansaveena the world over.



.-*About Hansaveena*.-

On 7th April 2000, Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar introduced to the World of Indian Classical Music, a new instrument christened by him as the “Hansaveena”. Shri Vishan Das, proprietor of M/S Rikhi Ram and Sons - the famous Instrument makes of Delhi, had made this Instrument under the constant guidance of Pandit Ravi Shankar. The Hansaveena unveiled by Pandit Ravi Shankar in a ceremony organized on his 80th birthday, was inaugurated by a performance of his senior disciple Pandit Barun Kumar Pal who is the pioneer in introducing the improvised Hawaiian Slide Guitar as an instrument to play Indian Classical Music.

Later, the Hansaveena was officially launched at different places in India, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Canada and USA. National and International TV channels like Doordarshan, ANI - News, ATN, and Sony - News covered the launch accompanied by concerts and lecture demonstrations on the Hansaveena by Pandit Barun Kumar Pal. Within a short time, the Hansaveena has become a very popular Instrument the world over for its beautiful tonal quality.

Apart from the regular fretboard of a slide Guitar everything in this Instrument is Indianised. The Instrument is made out of a single piece solid wood. Has a semi flat sound chamber like Tambura and Veena, five playing strings, one supporting, three Chikaris and 12 sympathetic strings. The edge of the hollow neck or fret board is beautifully curved to resemble like the long neck of a Swan. Above all, the tone of the Instrument is similar to the Veena, Vichitraveena and Sarod. The beautiful sustained tone helps an Artiste to play in the real Gayaki (Vocal) style. And so, perhaps, the name “Hansaveena” for this Instrument came naturally to the Sitar Maestro Pandit Ravi Shankar.

.-*Letter from Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar for Hansaveena*.-

FROM :

INNFAX EUROPE
TEL :

JUN. 21. 2000 1:25 PM P01 P 1

ॐ
Ravi Shankar

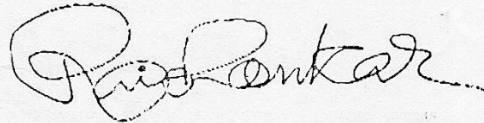
June 21, 2000

Sri Sujit Bhattacharya
Secretary
Salt Lake Cultural Association of Calcutta

Rikhi Ram Sharma, the great musical instrument maker of Lahore, was a friend of mine. After the partition he started his shop, 'Rikhi Ram & Sons', at New Delhi. In late 50's his son, Bishandas, became my disciple. Apart from being well trained by his late father he has always been very inventive with new ideas to improve upon our traditional instruments.

When I started my extensive world tours he made a few different experiments in making a few small tanpuras for me in different shapes, until the one I liked and still use! Since my sitar maker and dear friend Nodu Mallick died in mid-eighties, Bishandas along with his two talented sons, Ajay and Sanjay, did all the repairs and jawaris of my sitar. I even started playing sitars made specially for me by them. Bishandas has made a number of new instruments since then, all with my approval. Two years ago the one he did I named it 'Pushpa Veena'. This year with my suggestion he made a newer and better version, which I named 'Hansa Veena'. My disciple Barun Pal gave the inaugural recital on Hansa Veena on my 80th birthday at New Delhi on April 7th. I do hope this instrument gets the popularity it deserves. Though played much like a slide guitar, it has more of Indian characteristic of Vichitra Veena. It is ideal for playing Alap, Jod, etc. in Dhrupad style, as well as Khyal Gayaki style and instrumental Gat, Tan, Toda, etc.

My blessing and best wishes for the official launch of this instrument at the Salt Lake Cultural Association of Calcutta on June 23rd.



Ravi Shankar

277 Via Del Cerrito, Encinitas, California 92024
Fax: (760) 942-7815

.-*Some Key Moments for Hansaveena*.-



पं. रविशंकर की देन हंसवीणा

हिंदुस्तानी संगीत में सितार वादन के शिखर पुरुष पं. रविशंकर जैसा कोई दूसरा नहीं हुआ। देश-देशांतर में सितार के जरिए भारतीय संगीत का परचम फहराने वाले इस महान कलाकार ने कीर्तिमानों के जो स्तंभ गाड़े, वे संगीत जगत के लिए बड़ी उपलब्धि हैं। प्रतिष्ठित गुरु के रूप में भी उनकी अहम भूमिका थी। उनके अनगिनत शिष्यों में एक सुयोग्य शिष्य पं. बरुन कुमार पाल हैं। गुरु की शार्गिदी में लीन होकर सीखने के साथ पं. रविशंकर की परंपरा को समृद्ध करने का निरंतर प्रयास वे करते रहे।

पं. रविशंकर ने नये रागों को रचने के साथ हंसवीणा वाद्य का एक बड़े सुरीले अंदाज में निर्माण किया। सही मायने में उनके इस वाद्य को पूरी तरह से बरुन कुमार ने अपनाया और अपनी सूझबूझ से विकसित करने, नये रंग-रूपों से सजाने और लोकप्रिय करने में

उल्लेखनीय कार्य किया। आज उनके होनहार शिष्य रमनन वेंकटरमण इस वाद्य को कुशलता और सरसता से बजाने में उभरते नजर आ रहे हैं। एक कुशाग्र वादक के रूप में उन्हें संगीत के अनेकों संगीत सम्मेलनों में शामिल किया गया है, और उन्होंने अपने प्रभावी वादन से संगीत रसिकों से खासी सराहना अर्जित की है। रमनन ने परफार्मिंग आर्ट्स स्कूल, साधना स्कूल ऑफ म्यूजिक, डांस और आर्ट्स संस्थाओं की स्थापना की है। इनमें तकरीबन एक सौ छात्र भारतीय और पाश्चात्य आर्ट्स का प्रशिक्षण प्राप्त कर रहे हैं। उनके गुरु बरुन कुमार पाल ने पश्चिम के हवायिन गिटार को भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत में ढालने में जो सार्थक प्रयोग किया वह बहुत सफल रहा।

पं. रविशंकर की 80वीं वर्षगांठ पर बरुन जी के इस नये वाद्य पर वादन की सरस प्रस्तुति ने श्रोताओं को मुग्ध और

रोमांचित किया। पं. रविशंकर ने अपनी परिकल्पना से हंसवीणा निर्मित की। उसमें खास बात यह है कि सरस्वती वीणा, विचित्र वीणा और सरोद की ध्वनि का एक मधुर संचार है। तंत्रकारी के साथ गायिकी अंग को भी इसमें खुबसूरती से जोड़ा गया। गौरतलब है कि इस समय हंसवीणा को देश और पश्चिम के देशों में मशहूर करने में पं. बरुन कुमार का बड़ा योगदान है। हाल ही अरबिंदो आश्रम के आध्यात्मिक सभागार में रमनन ने बरुन जी द्वारा संरचित राग जोगस्तुति को हंसवीणा पर बड़ी



सरसता से प्रस्तुत किया। परंपरागत आधार पर आलाप में इस राग के वैचित्र्य रूप को उन्होंने सहजता से दर्शाया। पं. बरुन कुमार पाल ने अपनी परिकल्पना से इस राग को शकल देने में राग जोग के साथ राग मालकौंस को जोड़ा और बीच-बीच में पं. रविशंकर द्वारा रचित राग

जोगेश्वरी के अंश भी जोड़े। आलाप और जोड़ की प्रस्तुति के बाद मध्य लय एकताल पर गत की बंदिश को मोहक रसभाव से पेश करने में अपनी प्रतिभा को बखूबी दर्शाया।

रमनन की राग अलंकरण में गमक तानें, मींड के बोलों की निकास, तीनों सप्तकों में स्वरों का संचालन और कई प्रकार की गति में लय को बरतने में अच्छी पकड़ थी। आखिर में एकताल पर ही झाला में सुरों को विविध रंग भरकर पेश करने में उन्होंने खुबसूरत अंदाज दिखाया। कर्नाटक राग जग सम्मोहिनी को हिंदुस्तानी संगीत से पं. रविशंकर ने जिस शिद्दत से जोड़ा और सितार पर पेश किया, उसी आधार पर रमनन ने विलंबित और द्रुत तीनताल पर मनमोहक अंदाज में प्रस्तुत किया।

On An Indian Pitch

In a welcome trend, young people today seem keen on traditional music

by Venu Singh

THE AUDITORIUM was packed to capacity; members of the audience tense with anticipation as they waited for the concert to start. If you hadn't known who was playing that evening, you'd have thought the concert featured singers from Bollywood, or a maestro of classical music perhaps. Few other musicians could call for such a crowd.

But the musicians that evening were three young unknowns playing the flute, the santoor and the harmonium. Who would have thought, given that classical music is supposed to be dead or at least dying? Who would have imagined that an audience would have gathered for a classical concert not performed by someone world famous?

Classical music has been dying with every passing generation or so people have been saying. But it never actually dies. Instead it thrives. And that's because, even though there may not be as much hype about it as there is for modern forms of music, music is music. Tastes may differ but the music can't exist without music. And every generation has its share of people who yearn to learn an instrument.

INDIAN MUSIC ON A HIGH
It's no wonder, says santoor maestro Bipul Rai, who teaches at Delhi University. "I have been researching music therapy and have found that Indian musical instruments like the santoor and the flute are very effective in providing positive results," he says. "In fact, learning a musical instrument not only improves and sharpens the memory but also helps combat stress."

Rai teaches short-term and full-term music courses at Delhi

University, as well as the santoor - not an easy instrument to master. Recently, he says, he's had a considerable number of enquiries about santoor lessons, particularly from young people. "The best thing is that, today, the majority of my students are girls," says Rai. "This is quite amazing because girls don't usually opt for a complex instrument like this."

Perhaps this is because as time passes, we grow further and further away from the cultural imbalance caused by colonialism. Pandit Barun Kumar Pal has another take. He is a disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar, pioneer of the harmonium (an improvised version of the Hawaiian slide guitar suitable for Indian raga), faculty member of the Ravi Shankar Academy,

Delhi, and founder of the talent promotion society Shubham Music Circle. He points out: "While globalisation brought western influence into music, Indian classical music and instruments also gained a lot of attention and appreciation worldwide. That too has triggered interest among young people. The credit goes to their parents as well."

IT'S IN OUR GENES
Dr Kiran Sethi is the founder of the pioneering, indeed by now legendary cultural organisation, Spic Music, formed in 1977 to popularise and promote Indian classical music. According to him, every so, at some point of time, we want to know more about where they come from, and as they grow older, they start realising the importance of their own culture. "Indian music comes naturally to us Indians," he says. "That's exactly what happened with Ramanam Venkatarman."



CHAYANIKA RAMAN
Been playing the santoor for five years
"Even 30 minutes of playing the santoor makes me unwind and transports me to a beautiful place. This helps me to concentrate better on my work"

No one in 25-year-old Ramanam's family is musically inclined, so it took him much time and thought to convince them he could have a career in music.

"I have been playing the guitar for the last ten years, and I play the drums and keyboard too," he says. "But to convince my family to allow me to do this, I had to take them to watch the film 3 Idiots."

The film that suggests youngsters should do what they're inclined to do helped his parents change their minds about Ramanam's future, and he joined AR Rahman's music school in Chennai to study audio engineering. After finishing the two-and-a-half-month course, Ramanam interned with Rahman's studio for a while, then returned to Delhi and set up a studio and a band called Dementia.

Ramanam performed with Dementia and a couple of other bands, but he felt a void within himself. "I had created my own space in western music, but I didn't feel satisfied," he says. "In music, people say it is important to satisfy your soul. But that feeling was missing."

One day Ramanam attended a concert by Pandit Barun Kumar Pal who was performing on the harmonium and he was immediately full in love with the instrument. "It was simply amazing. The sound it



RAMANAM VENKATARAMAN
Been playing the harmonium since he was five
"The satisfaction and depth that is there in Indian classical music and instruments is incomparable. It really satisfies your soul"



PRATEEK SAXENA
Been playing the flute for seven years
"The soothing notes of the flute not just help in keeping my temperament right but also improve my concentration while studying"

GET SMART WITH MUSIC
Research in the field of music proves that people who have received music education are generally smarter than their non-musical counterparts. In fact, Dr Kiran Sethi feels that musical education should begin even before a child goes to school. "Music training is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills - the skills necessary for learning maths and science," he says.

Perhaps that's why 25-year-old Chayanika Raman, a sociology student at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), was transported back to her childhood in Assam when she first heard the santoor at a concert some years ago.

Totally enchanted by the sound, Chayanika looked for a good santoor teacher, and after several attempts, met her guru Bipul Rai. "Many people approached as a student told me that I was confused and actually wanted to learn the sitar, because girls don't usually play the santoor," says Chayanika. But for the last five years, she has kept at the instrument, performing at college festivals in JNU. "My friends really enjoy the music and a few of them have even joined santoor classes themselves," says Chayanika.

Though Chayanika is busy with her studies, she makes time

for the santoor every evening. "Even 30 minutes of playing the santoor makes me unwind and transports me to a beautiful place," she says.

FULFILLING EXPERIENCE
Singer, musician and Bollywood composer Shankar Mahadevan believes that playing a musical instrument brings you joy, peace and a sense of fulfilment that helps lift the spirit. "It not only mentions a sense of fun and contentment.

That may be why no one was more surprised than 26-year-old Prateek Saxena himself when, as he started learning the flute seven years ago, his adolescent angst vanished.

"Just like other teenagers, I got angry about little things and felt that no one at home understood me," recalls Prateek. "But that changed after I started playing the flute. Not only were my parents happy but the soothing notes of the flute also helped me improve my grades in the class 12 board examinations."

Prateek had always been musically inclined and used to play the month organ till he watched a flute performance by musician and composer Raghu Sathar. "I was fascinated by the soothing sound and decided to buy a flute for myself immediately," he says. "Then I tried learning how to play from instructions I found on the Net, but I wasn't very successful."

So Prateek began checking out music schools. "The Gandharv Mahavidyalaya just offer a certificate course. I wanted something more comprehensive. Then I learned about the Ravi Shankar Academy and attended a concert there which was amazing. I enrolled immediately and have been learning there ever since."

Currently doing his masters in travel and tourism from Amity University, Prateek's big dream is to perform solo one day and also learn the saxophone. "Mixes of classical and western music work really well," he says.

No one knows that better than Ricky Kej. "My Grammy winning album had a strong influence of Hindustani classical music and was appreciated critically and commercially the world over. I urge parents to encourage their children to take up an Indian classical instrument. The benefits in their overall growth will be tremendous."

www.bhaskar.com
Follow @bhaskar1972 on Twitter

HT Brunch

सुबह-ए-बनारस
गंगोत्री पर मुखर हुई हंसवीणा



वाराणसी। सुबह-ए-बनारस में शनिवार को दिल्ली से पधारे युवा कलाकार रामन्ना वेंकटरमन का हंसवीणा वादन हुआ। मैहर घराने के पं वरुण कुमार पाल के शिष्य रामन्ना ने राग जौनपुरी में आलाप से वादन का आरंभ किया। तबले पर अमित ईश्वर ने संगत की। संचालन डा. प्रीतेष आचार्य ने किया।

.-*Important Links*.-

- Ramanan Venkatraman (Venram)
 - Website Main - <https://www.ven-ram.com>
 - Hansaveena Story - <https://www.ven-ram.com/hansaveena-story>
 - Hansaveena Showreel - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Ragas on Hansaveena by Ramanan
 - Raag Jogeshwari - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Raag Saraswati - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Raag Bageshri - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Raag Madhuvanti - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Raag Abhogi - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Live Concert Links:
 - Link 1 - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Link 2 - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Link 3 - [Youtube Link](#)
 - Link 4 - [Youtube Link](#)

.-*Personal & Contact Information*.-



Ramanan Venkatraman
ramananhansaveena@gmail.com

Address: C005 Yamuna Apartments,
Alaknanda, New Delhi 110019

Phone: +91-9999019395 ||
+91-9811625687 || +91-7838065014

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'raman' with a flourish underneath.

Thanking You,
Ramanan