



Balachander
Veena (Dhrupad)

Born in 1967 into a family of music lovers, I was exposed to many forms of Indian Music since childhood - South Indian and North Indian Music, Temple Vedic Chants, Traditional and Folk Music etc. This early initiation has had a lasting impact on my understanding and perception of music. I also received early training in Carnatic Music on the Saraswati Veena.

My formal training in music began in 1986 under **Pt. Pradeep Barot**, a brilliant Sarod player, student of late **Pt. Vasant Rai** and **Smt. Annapoorna Devi**. He taught me the art of playing the Sarod, along with many fine nuances of Indian classical music.

At about the same time, I came into contact with the legendary beenkar, the **Late Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar**, who was to become my idol and guru. Thus I was initiated into the intricacies of the Dhrupad style. One of the most valuable lessons I learnt from Bade Ustad – as he was fondly called – was “the way to think about music”. After his untimely demise in 1990, I came under the tutelage of his younger brother, the renowned Dhrupad vocalist - **Ustad Zia Fariduddin Dagar** - and continue to receive training and inspiration from him till today.

Alongside my musical pursuits, I also finished my Post Graduation in Physics from St. Xaviers' College, Mumbai in 1990.

In 2002, I undertook a research project to design and build a modified version of the Saraswati Veena which would be better suited for the style, nuances and the needs of Dhrupad. In 2004, I was awarded a 2 year **Research Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India** for the project “**North Meets South – Dhrupad on Saraswati Veena**”. The modified instrument was successfully completed in the year 2006 and ever since I have been playing Dhrupad on the ‘modified Saraswati Veena’.

Contact @
B-4, Shivam Bldg
T.M.C Colony, Mandala
Mumbai 400 088, India
+91-22-25515959
+91-98210 97304

bala.chander@sadharani.com
www.sadharani.com