

veena

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From Bangalore to the Bay Pavani Vijay Kaushik



**Plus: Shubha Mudgal, Kushal Das,
Sadhana Sargam, Deepak Kshirsagar,
Aditya Bhattarcharya, Sonia Sabri
& more!**

Hostage to fortune

An award-winning student of Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Deepak Kshirsagar still feels trapped in Rajasthan, writes Richard Turner.

I was fortunate to be born in a family of musicians where music is a worship. Trained in vocal music by my grandfather and father, I once heard a concert of Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt and, being inspired by his performance, I immediately decided to opt a career in Mohan Veena only.' Thus Deepak Kshirsagar in an autobiographical note for his official publicity. The Sur Mani (Mumbai Sur Singer Samsad, 1998) and Yuva Puruskar (Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademi, Jodhpur, 2001) title winner later clarifies, in an email to your correspondent: 'Initially I was asked by my reverent guru and grandfather Pt. B.N. Kshirsagar to practise any guru and grandfather Pt. B.N. Kshirsagar to practise any instrument for accuracy of swaras, as is the tradition, and later I found that this particular instrument can alone enable me to play the peculiarities of dhrupad and khayal gayaki as well as the traditional peculiarities. Besides [the] number of artistes devoted to this instrument were comparatively less, especially the guitar that makes the west meet east, which can be a means to understand the feeling of globalisation.'

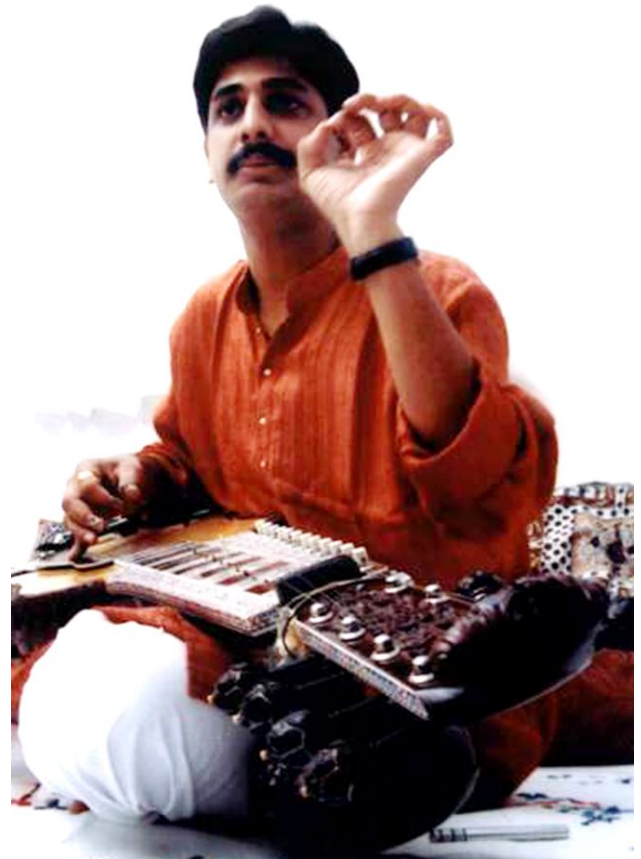
The artist's ideas, and his literary style of expression, draw on an academic background which ranges from BA in English Literature to a Sangeet Visharad for Musicology, via an MA in Music.

Deepak's performing experience is no less impressive. He has given recitals at the Ustad Allauddin Khan Sangeet Academy, Bhopal the India International Centre in New Delhi and for the Dr. Prabha Atre Foundation gurukul in Pune. Moreover, Deepak is a regular broadcaster on All India Radio and Doordarshan.

He is clearly a serious, committed and professional musician. For example, while he submits a CD, recorded at a concert in 2000, Deepak accompanies it out what he considers to be a marked improvement in his performance.

While the listener certainly detects a greater assurance and lyrical wit in the April 2004 radio broadcast, the full tone and master of tall were already there in 2000. But this constructive self-criticism and rigorous approach is laudable and refreshing, when we consider how many other musicians appear ready to trade on their fame or past reputation alone. With Deepak Kshirsagar you sense that each performance will be a new experience in its own right.

The artist is still comparatively young and healthily ambitious: 'As aspired generally by the musicians, noteworthy to be mentioned, I desire to enlist my name amongst the top ranking artistes of instrumental music as my guru Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt saheb,' he writes. He is also interested in experimental collaborative work, giving the fairly



original example of 'Jugalbandi and its introduction to Arabian and African music.' That should give him some scope!

So what's holding Deepak back? The following is worth quoting in full: 'Rajasthan has contributed a lot into Indian music, especially in introducing some styles of vocal and instrumental music. But in the first quarter of the last century, those traditions had lost their existence resulting in the fact that even representatives of those styles are rarely found. That is why the new generation are running to Mumbai and Kolkata for training. As such there are to appear in national and international dais unless supported by the maestros, living at the places or abroad. This has been emphasised in a book also entitled *Rajasthan Ki Sangitik Parampara*.

'Ours is the only family from Maharashtra in Rajasthan, successfully maintaining the traditions for more than 75 years.....'

'And, very interestingly, the dancers from Rajasthan (Jaipur Gharana of Kathak dance) are forced to leave the province for their career to Mumbai, Lucknow and Banaras.'

Deepak Kshirsagar is ready to offer recitals in the UK. His email address is ddk5275@gmail.com