

Appreciating Hindustani Music
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Lecture 50
Art of the Tabla - Introduction

The tabla is one of the most visible Indian instruments globally for the sweetness and variety of its tonality. It helps, of course, that we have masters like Ustad Zakir Hussain whose dazzling artistry makes it hard to ignore the instrument. The tabla is primarily an accompaniment to Khayal, and instrumental music, thumri and the dance form Kathak but tabla is also performed solo. So, there are solo performances of tabla.

There is a way a typical tabla solo performance unfolds and it includes some typical elements of presentation. Tabla composition and improvisation is a sophisticated and complex art. Dr. Aneesh Pradhan is a leading tabla player and a scholar. He has created video modules to explain some fundamentals of the art of tabla, the art of solo performance and the kind of compositions and variations that we can hear in a solo tabla performance.