

SERIOUS

Sheema Mukherjee Biography

Sheema Mukherjee absorbed North Indian classical music and the western tradition side-by-side and studied Indian classical music with Pandit Nikhil Banerjee and sitar with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan in the USA. Brought up between Britain and India, she has a rich background to draw on in her own compositions and collaborations.

Sheema works across many styles and genres from eastern and western classical music to jazz, pop and dance music. She has collaborated with internationally renowned artists such as Natacha Atlas, Transglobal Underground, Noel Gallagher, Cornershop, the Bulgarian Folk singer Yanke and with Simon Emmerson from the Afro-Celts. Another significant collaboration is with UK saxophonist Courtney Pine and Sheema has been featured on his albums *Back In The Day* and *Devotion* and was a guest artist on the 'On Track' tour – a project for the Manchester Commonwealth Games. She is currently working as part of The Imagined Village project featuring Martin and Eliza Carthy, Billy Bragg, Benjamin Zephaniah and a host of other folk/roots luminaries.

Sheema has toured the world with a variety of ensembles. Key performances include the World Music Festival (Chicago), Montreux Jazz Festival, the Olympia-Halle (Munich), supporting Jimmy Page and Robert Plant throughout their European tour (1998) and the Olympics Arts Festival for Sydney 2000. She also makes regular appearances at WOMAD (UK) with her own ensembles.

A versatile and creative musician, Sheema is evolving both as a composer and as a collaborator. Recent work has included compositions for the cross-genre performance collective Cascade: Beyond Eight Bars, co-writing a piece with Turkish-born and Montreal-based Mercan Dede for his album *Su*, an improvisation with Australian recorder virtuoso Genevieve Lacey in Westminster Abbey for Commonwealth Day and a creative development role in composition and song writing in Beijing, Hong Kong and Gateshead as part of the PRS Foundation and Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong Creative Exchange Project. Larger scale work has included composition for full orchestra, electric and acoustic guitars, bass guitar, kit drum and tablas for two new pieces of theatre (*Non-contact Time* and *Gluey and the Lion*) that formed part of the Northern Exposure Festival at the West Yorkshire Playhouse.

Sheema was commissioned by Tamasha Theatre Company to create an original soundtrack to accompany their major new musical adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*. The project was billed as 'Brontë goes to Bollywood' and it premiered in the spring of 2009.

Current projects include a tour with The Imagined Village and a composition entitled *Bending The Dark*, a specially commissioned New Music 20x12 piece for next year's Cultural Olympiad. This will be performed with The Imagined Village, with support from the PRS for Music Foundation, the BBC, The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, and Sound and Music.

In addition to her composition and live work, Sheema is a rigorous and disciplined teacher and has conducted many workshops in improvisation and composition as well as classes focussing on her instruments (both eastern and western) in the UK and abroad. She teaches young people, adults, people with special needs and with all levels of musicianship.

www.mukherjee.co.uk

www.prsformusicfoundation.com

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