

A photograph of Aditya Kalyanpur, a young man with dark hair, wearing a red traditional Indian kurta with blue embroidery. He is smiling and playing two tabla drums. The drums are positioned in front of him, one slightly to the left and one to the right. The background is dark, making the red kurta and the light-colored tabla drums stand out.

# Aditya Kalyanpur

## The Face of Indian Drumming

A child prodigy, Aditya Kalyanpur started playing tabla at age 5. Having studied with the greatest Indian drum (table) masters, Ustad Allarakha and Ustad Zakir Hussain, Kalyanpur has made a distinguished career working with some of the most prestigious names in Indian classical, jazz, and fusion genres.

He has performed with Indian classical giants Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, Pandit Jasraj, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Dr. Mrs. N Rajam, Ustad Sultan Khan, Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt, AR Rahman, Shankar Mahadevan, Pandit Jasrajji, and with jazz and fusion artists Larry Coryell, George Brooks, Kenwood Denard, Boston-based jazz band Natraj, Mickey Hart, and John McLaughlin.

Kalyanpur was first seen with his Guru Ustad Zakir Hussain for the famous "Wah Taj!" television commercial at the age of 11. Having the honor of being recognized as an "A" Grade Artist of All India Radio, he has given public performances along with his guru. As a young man, Kalyanpur lived up to the words and reputations of his teachers, mastering the intricacies of the tabla to smoothly accommodate to the requirements of the main artist. His style consists of bold and clear execution of syllables, pinpoint precision in rhythm, coupled with a colossal repertoire of compositions and improvisational techniques.

Honored with the title of Taal - Mani, Aditya Kalyanpur is the recipient of I.T.C's prestigious Vidyasagar Award as well as the Sangeet Visharad. A commerce graduate, Aditya Kalyanpur has also achieved the distinct title as a Music Diplomat from Mumbai University. He has received scholarship from the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training in New Delhi. A recipient of the National Scholarship for Advanced Training instituted by the government of India, Aditya has also won the prestigious Pandit Jasraj Competition held at the Vedic Heritage Center, Long Island, New York.

In addition to many awards given in India and the United States, Kalyanpur is one of the first tabla players ever to be invited to Estonia for the prestigious Orient Arts Festival. As a soloist and accompanist, he has performed at other prestigious music festivals in India and abroad including the Edinburgh festival in Scotland, the Earagal Arts Festival in Ireland, and the Jazz Yatra in Bombay, India. On a more local scene, Kalyanpur has also appeared at the Great Lakes Folk Festival held every year in Lansing, Michigan, and many other festivals and competitions held across the United States. He served on the faculty board of the Raganjali School of Music and Harvard Sangeet School.

In 1990 he was specially picked by Ustad Allarkha to be featured in the TV commercial "Wah Taj" with his Guru Ustad Zakir Hussain. Since, he has lent the enchanting music of his tabla to numerous commercials. We hear his tabla ringing in the background of the film Everybody Says I am Fine where Zakir Hussain composed the background score.

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As a mark of his true versatility as a musician, Kalyanpur has performed solo for many bands and instrumental groups, including the world famous The Rolling Stones and also recorded for their saxophonist, Tim Ries. His foreign collaborations include working with pop star Katy Perry for her album Prism on the single “Legendary Lovers” produced by Doctor Luke. He went on the “Jai Ho” world tour with Slumdog Millionaire composer, double-Oscar and Grammy awardee AR Rahman, and performed with Grammy winner John Popper at the prestigious Carnegie Hall. He has also had the honor of having worked with former “American Idol” music director and Grammy-nominated musician John Beasley.

Kalyanpur credits himself as one of the youngest tabla maestros who is making Indian classical music more accessible to music students and audiences around the world, particularly establishing the appreciation for this traditional art form in the United States. He currently leads the fusion band Fuzikk, and is a member of the world renowned group Bombay Jazz comprised of jazz legends Larry Coryell, George Brooks and Indian Flute Maestro Pandit Ronu Mazumdar.

When he is not touring and performing, Kalyanpur dedicates his time as a music teacher and has founded the New England School of Music (NESOM) in Boston, Massachusetts, which continues to grow and consists of over a hundred students from an array of music and cultural backgrounds. Kalyanpur has designed his own curriculum where students of all ages can learn his original compositions, kaidas, and relas, which are not featured in any other music schools. He is the inventor of the "Tik" technique, made famous by popular tabla players around the world. NESOM offers intense summer workshops, providing students with performance opportunities at renowned institutions such as Springstep, Middle Oak School, and Harvard University where he has taught tabla performance at their Sangeet Music School in Boston.

His Bollywood association includes having performed on the famous song “Mere Dholna” from the film Bhool Bhulaiya featuring Bollywood superstar Vidya Balan, composed by music director Pritam, for which percussion Maestro Taufiq Quereshi did the rhythm programming. He performed several live concerts with Bollywood music legend Shankar Mahadevan, recorded for several Jingles (just to name a few 'Wah Taj', 'Emami,' 'Center Fresh,' 'Tata Sky,' etc.), and recorded all the dance moves for prabhudeva thriller movie ABCD.

His own musical achievements include the torchbearer of the Punjab Gharana style, in which he was taught by the legendary Ustad Allarakha - famous for his collaboration with the great sitarist, Pandit Ravi Shankar and tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain. Kalyanpur also possesses an in depth knowledge of different gharana styles and schools of playing, unheard of from the tabla players of his generation and more importantly which he is passing on to his students.

Kalyanpur's involvement doesn't stop here, he is also currently working together with professor Dr. Peter Kvetko of Salem State University's music department in Salem, MA. He is helping to establish an examination program allowing for music students to gain academic credits in conjunction with the esteemed 'Gandharva Mahavidyalaya', the largest examination board recognized by the government of India. He has performed at and conducted several workshops, lec-dems at the prestigious venues such as Harvard, MIT, Cornell, Columbia, Univeristy of Florida, Maryland, U Mass Darmouth, Univ of Texas- Lubbock, Austin, UC Santa Barbara, Jazz Standard in NYC, Dakotas in Minneapolis, Yoshis in San Francisco.

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One of his proudest accomplishments, Kalyanpur established the non-profit Shyamal Music Foundation (SMF) in Mumbai, India, in memory of his late mother who recently lost her battle with breast cancer. The organization works to raise funds for cancer patients and to promote, preserve and propagate Indian classical music by giving a platform to the next generation of legendary musicians. Kalyanpur envisioned this foundation as a means to raise funds for cancer patients through launching DISHA, an unprecedented benefit concert series, which features musical performances by some of the most inspiring Indian classical musicians of the world. SMF has so far featured over two-dozen artists and supported over a dozen kids suffering from cancer.

