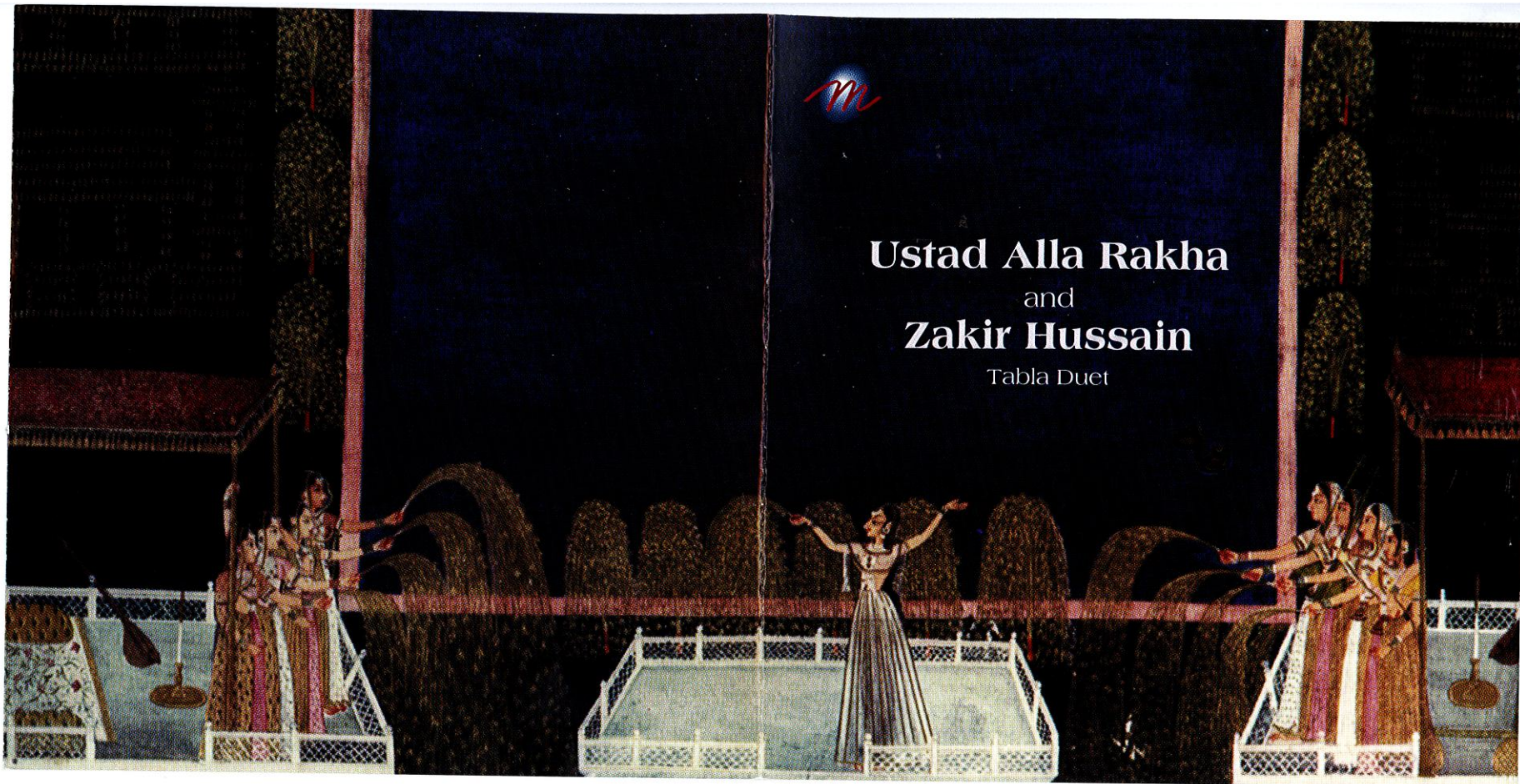




Ustad Alla Rakha
and
Zakir Hussain

Tabla Duet



USTAD ALLA RAKHA AND ZAKIR HUSSAIN

Tabla Duet in Tintāl

The tabla duet of Ustad Alla Rakha and Zakir Hussain is an experience of rhythmic improvisation at its finest as theme and variation are explored with seemingly inexhaustible imagination. This performance, recorded live in Calcutta in January of 1991, accompanied by Ramesh Misra on sarangi, highlights the rhythmic forays and exchanges that have delighted audiences all over the world. Ustad Alla Rakha begins the performance with the development of a simple *pēshkar*, creating new combinations with *kaida* and *rēla* phrases culminating in spontaneous *tihāīs*. He passes on the same ideas to Zakir Hussain, who then develops them, adding new tones using various positions on the tabla (right-hand drum) and melodic modulations of the banya (left-hand drum). Trading improvisation in this form, they build into a *rēla*-like crescendo ending with a perfect on-the-spot creation of a *chakradār tihāī*. The duet then moves in a traditional manner from *pēshkar* to *kaida*, *rēla* and *chhand* and on to some of the classic *gats*, *parans* and *chakradārs* of the Punjab *gharānā*. The artists build each movement clearly and symmetrically with their *tihāīs* providing a consummately refined resolution.

GLOSSARY:

Pēshkar: A type of rhythmic improvisation which begins a traditional tabla solo.

Kaida: An improvisation on fixed themes; a poetical use of theme and variation.

Rēla: Very fast, drumroll-like improvisations on fixed themes.

Tihāī: A rhythmic cadence repeating a phrase three times.

Chakradār Tihāī: A *tihāī* repeated three times.

Chakradār: A composition (such as a *gat* or *paran*) ending in a *tihāī*, repeated three times.

Chhand: The layering of another tempo (such as 3's, 5's, 7's, 9's, etc.) on the main rhythm cycle.

Gat and *Paran*: Traditional classical compositions.

Gharānā: A school or style of music or dance. The Punjab *gharānā* is one of the five major schools of tabla, having its roots in pakhawaj-style drumming. This style was popularized earlier in this century by Mian Kader Bux, the guru of Ustad Alla Rakha.

USTAD ALLA RAKHA

Once in a great while, there emerges a musician who, through his genius, injects that certain spark necessary to elevate an instrument to another level of expression and appreciation. For tabla, Ustad Alla Rakha is such an artist, having brought his instrument a stature and respect never before enjoyed.

A disciple of Mian Kader Bux, the great guru of the Punjab *gharana*, Ustad Alla Rakha is presently the most celebrated exponent of this style. A formidable accompanist, he toured the world with Pandit Ravi Shankar almost constantly for twenty years, receiving the highest accolades from world audiences and critics. As a performer, he is famous for his improvisations, his exceptional qualities of freshness and proportion, and his exquisite tone production effected by a technique which has continued to refine until the present day. Moreover, he has developed a playing style that is a virtual reference for tabla players of the present generation.

Ustad Alla Rakha has also accomplished much as a composer, having scored music for over thirty-five films, many of his songs becoming top hits in India in the forties and fifties. He has received numerous titles and awards, among them the "Padma Shri" title from the President of India and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award from India's most prestigious cultural organization.

He is the father of tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain, one of the world's great percussionists. In recent years, their tabla duet performance has become increasingly popular and sought after, both in India and in the West.

Zakir Hussain is today appreciated in the music world at large, as an international highest order, his consistently brilliant as a national treasure in his own country. The favorite accompanist for many, he has not let his genius rest there, with many historic collaborations and masterful improvisational dexterity.

A child prodigy, Zakir was already in the States in 1970, embarking on an international concert dates a year. His playing has composed and performed many other special projects. In 1988, he received the title of "Padma Shri" by the Indian Government. In 1990, he was awarded the Indo-American cultural contribution to relations between India and the United States, was presented with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, making him one of the youngest musicians to receive this honor from the cultural institute.

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Zakir Hussain is today appreciated not only in the field of percussion, but also in the
music world at large, as an international phenomenon. A classical tabla virtuoso of the
highest order, his consistently brilliant and exciting performances have established him
as a national treasure in his own country, India, and gained him fame all over the world.
The favorite accompanist for many of India's greatest classical musicians and dancers,
he has not let his genius rest there. Zakir's contribution to world music has been unique,
with many historic collaborations. His playing is marked by uncanny intuition and
masterful improvisational dexterity, founded in formidable knowledge and study.

A child prodigy, Zakir was already touring by the age of twelve. He came to the United
States in 1970, embarking on an international career which includes no fewer than 150
concert dates a year. His playing has been featured on innumerable recordings and he
has composed and performed music for feature films, documentaries, television and
other special projects. In 1988, he became the youngest percussionist to ever be awarded
the title of "Padma Shri" by the Indian government, a title given to civilians of merit. In
1990, he was awarded the Indo-American Award, in recognition of his outstanding
cultural contribution to relations between the United States and India. In April, 1991, he
was presented with the Sangeet Nātak Akademi Award by the President of India, making
him one of the youngest musicians to receive this recognition from India's esteemed
cultural institute.



Alain SWIETLIK
27 juillet 93 - É d. -



Produced by: Zakir Hussain

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| Engineer/Associate Producer: Ram Ghoshal | Mastering: Brian Peters, Craig Dory Recordings |
| Art direction and design: Antonia Minnecola | Project Coordinator: Anthony Hindson |
| Graphic Artist: Sten Ryason | Liner Notes: Antonia Minnecola |
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Recorded live at Ramkrishna Mission Auditorium, Calcutta, January 1991

Moment Records has been founded to record and present great moments from performances of the classical music of India and contemporary world music. Indian classical music, based on improvisation, spontaneity and a refined concept of the relation between performer and audience has certain demands all its own. Before the advent of the concert hall in India, music, which had its origins in the temple, was played at court or in even smaller chambers, and it is this intimacy that is reflected in the philosophy toward the evocation of rasa or mood. We at Moment Records feel that by recording live performances with innovative, state of the art techniques, we are faithfully presenting the experience of this great music. Moment Records is dedicated to capturing this quality of performance, using advanced recording technology.

We have used custom modified Neumann microphones (tube and solid state, Schoeps tube), a custom-built John Hardy mike pre-amp, combined with a modified Sony DAT recorder using Monster Reference Neumann cables. A Krell D/A Processor and CD Transport as well as Krell reference electronics and Martin Logan speaker system were used for post-production evaluation.



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