



Old First Concerts

presents

Utsav Lal

piano

Manik Khan

sarod

Friday, November 19, 2021 at 8 PM

Old First Church

1751 Sacramento St. at Van Ness Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94109

(415) 474-1608 www.oldfirstconcerts.org

ABOUT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

- Great venue for music with beautiful acoustics and amazing Steinway concert grand piano.
- Primarily local emerging and mid-career professional musicians presenting innovative programs.
- Every concert offers new insights and virtuosic performances.
- Complimentary refreshments served at intermission or after the concert.
- An independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization devoted to presenting music at affordable prices, especially for low-income seniors and students.
- Solo, chamber music, and world music concerts year-round since 1970.

DONATING TO OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Ticket sales provide about 38 percent of our operating revenue each year. In addition, we rely on support from private foundations and Grants for the Arts from the city of San Francisco. Our generous individual donors complete the picture. We invite you to join us in our mission to connect audiences and local musicians and build up the classical music and world music scene in San Francisco. Donations are tax-deductible and donating on our website is easy and secure: www.oldfirstconcerts.org/give/, or checks can be mailed to: Old First Concerts, 1751 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. Thank you!

COVID-19 RESPONSE: RETURNING TO THE MUSIC

Old First Concerts is committed to the health and safety of our audiences, performers and staff. We look forward to having all audiences back in our space when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we are happy to be able to continue presenting artists of the highest caliber to our audience in the Bay Area—and beyond—via livestreamed events. We are following city guidelines and safety protocols to help ensure the safest possible environment for our performers and staff.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Following us on **Facebook** is a great way to keep informed about the latest concert information. While you are there, don't forget to **share** events with your friends and hit the "Like" button liberally. [facebook.com/oldfirstconcerts/](https://www.facebook.com/oldfirstconcerts/)

You can also find us on **Instagram** [@oldfirstconcerts](https://www.instagram.com/oldfirstconcerts) with information about upcoming events plus photos and videos from our concerts.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

In this unique duet concert of piano and sarod, known in Indian Classical Music as a 'jugalbandi', Utsav Lal and Manik Khan come together to seamlessly blend their experiences and explore North Indian Classical Music with nuance and depth. The evening has in store a fascinating repertoire of ragas presented in their traditional form and splendour and the artists celebrate Indian Classical Music through their own musical styles, in a unified and singular creative vision.

The highly acclaimed musicians—Utsav Lal, a disciple of Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar from the Dagarvani Dhrupad vocal tradition and Manik Khan, son of the legendary Ustad Ali Akbar Khan from the Maihar tradition, represent the new generation of Indian Classical Music exponents. At O1C, the artists perform together for the first time ever, and bring a meeting of a great musical legacy, being perpetuated in two traditions that are distinctly different and yet the same. With their individual acoustic instruments, Lal and Khan offer a musical confluence that flows from the expansive range of the piano to the deep resonant tone of the sarod.

Dating back centuries, with extraordinarily elaborate rules & systems to govern pitch, rhythm and structure, Indian Classical Music is one of the most ancient classical traditions on earth and at the very heart and soul of Indian music is the raga. For the uninitiated, Indian Classical Music moves from slow and meditative to pulsing and ecstatic. Music that is captivating with great range and variety in tempo and emotion, the concert will begin with the traditional solo exploratory style of Alap-Jod-Jhala. The music is completely improvised within strict guidelines of the tradition and the raga slowly expands from a single note outward to complex waves of rhythms and virtuosic passages.

To enjoy the evening to the utmost, one must relax into the rhythmic and melodic patterns of a great cultural heritage & allow the musicians to take you on to an unexplored musical sojourn of ragas!

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Indian pianist/composer **Utsav Lal**, often known as the 'Raga Pianist' is recognized as the rarest of pianists. Stunning the world with his innovative handling of Indian Classical Music on a Western instrument, *The Irish Times* describes Utsav Lal as "a fleet-fingered performer whose best moments can be both highly evocative and dazzling." Lal's ground-breaking work has garnered an impressive career spanning two decades, with solo performances at world famous venues like Carnegie Hall (New York), Southbank Centre (London), Kennedy Center (Washington DC), Steinway Hall (New York), Asia Society (Hong Kong), Arts Center (Melbourne).

Treading the careful line between an ancient tradition and the innate desire for innovation with utmost respect, Lal's music is acclaimed for its sincerity, depth and powerful intensity. With unfailing clarity of technique and rhythmic virtuosity, his work is deeply influenced by Dhrupad and gains inspiration from a vast array of sources such as The Necks, Thelonious Monk, Tsegué-Maryam Guèbrou and Cecil Taylor. Lal has challenged commonly understood ways of improvisation to develop his own unique voice for the piano, taking stage at leading festivals including Novara Jazz (Italy), San Francisco Silent Film (USA) AsiaTopa Festival (Australia), Masters of Tradition (Ireland).

Endorsed as Young Steinway Artist, TiE Aspire Young Indian Achiever, Yamaha Jazz Scholar, Lal has been recognized for his extensive collaborative work with Irish, Scottish, Jazz and Experimental artists including leading names like Martin Hayes, Dennis Cahill, Winifred Horan, Australian Contemporary Circus Theatre CIRCA, Talvin Singh, George Brooks, Rajna

Swaminathan. Lal has 7 solo record releases which include a historic world's first album on the microtonal 'Fluid Piano' (2016). Lal holds a Masters in Contemporary Improvisation (New England Conservatory of Music), Bachelor's in Jazz (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) and is a disciple of Dhrupad vocalist Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar.

Manik Khan is the youngest son of the legendary maestro, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan. His life has been steeped in the ancient tradition of North Indian classical music since birth; his childhood was spent listening to his father in countless concerts, and attending his classes at the Ali Akbar College of Music.

He initially started studying Tabla under the tutelage of Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri but, wanting to follow in the footsteps of his family, began his formal training in the Sarod with his father at the age of 13. Manik spent his formative years accompanying his father and elder brother (Alam Khan) on stage, touring for the last decade of his father's extensive performance career.

Alongside a solo concert career, he has worked with various ensembles to present his father's music in a way that has seldom been heard before. This includes working with Bay Area schools to bring Indian Classical Music to their youth orchestras, and collaborating with conductor Michael Morgan and the Fremont Symphony Orchestra.

Manik resides in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he continues his musical studies with his elder brother. He currently is teaching at the Ali Akbar College of Music, and is working to preserve and continue his family's legacy – helping to keep this tradition of India's rich cultural history alive and flourishing.

COMING UP AT OLD FIRST CONCERTS

Friday, December 3 at 8 pm—*Holiday Guitars*

Larry Ferrara & Zachary Donaldson, guitars; Sandra Betti, flute; and the guitar ensemble *Guitars à la mode*

A special program celebrating the yuletide season with the music of J. S. Bach, John Dowland, and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. Performances will include guitar, guitar and flute, guitar and harp, as well as festive holiday music for guitar orchestra directed by Larry Ferrara.

Saturday, December 4 at 8 pm

San Francisco Yiddish Combo

SFYC is embarked on a journey around the world to present their own unique blend of everything that is Klezmer, mixed with years of experience in the jazz, blues, folk, and even hip-hop world.

Sunday, December 5 at 4 pm

Young Women's Chorus—*Carols by Candlelight*

Start your holiday season with an exquisite candle-lit concert that includes Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* performed with harpist Meredith Clark, as well as music by Hildegard von Bingen, Rachmaninoff, Busto, Randall Thompson and contemporary settings of traditional carols.

For tickets & more information visit www.oldfirstconcerts.org

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Old First Concerts' piano is a New York Steinway D model, circa 1980, with Hamburg action. It was donated by The Stanley Ibler Fund, and is maintained by David Love Piano Service and Restoration.