



TORONTO TABLA ENSEMBLE

WORLD MUSIC ORGANIZATION INC.

2013-2014

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR OUR
COMMUNITY



WHO ARE WE ?

Toronto Tabla Ensemble is a not-for-profit organization committed to fostering interest in the Indian drum called tabla and the classical north Indian rhythmic system with the aim of developing and expanding this musical form. We do this by offering classes and performing for a widespread audience.



MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Going into the 23rd year of Toronto Tabla Ensemble (TTE), it is time to step back and think about the future of this organization.

This year is the start of a new era in the history of the TTE. I had taken some time off the past year and a half to travel and reconnect with my roots in India, and my family. I also spent time in Europe and the U.S. and exploring the evolution of Indian music in these continents.

It was an eye-opening and inspiring experience. Spending time with my brother, the legendary Pandit Chitresh Das, helped crystallize my own vision. I saw the generation of his students embracing their culture and taking it to a new standard.

I came back determined to build a youth ensemble with children between eight and 16 years of age. We would not only teach them how to play tabla, but shape them into knowledgeable, attentive and creative young adults. Using the foundations of tabla, they are learning math, language, history of India as well as Canada, and about public speaking and performance. For children of South-Asian descent growing up in North America the art will nourish their roots. This will always stay with them. We are finding even parents are learning about their countries while sitting in the classroom!

In order to reach the youth, we have opened new locations in Mississauga and Scarborough in 2013. They are learning quickly and are set to debut with the Toronto Tabla Ensemble in the spring of 2014.

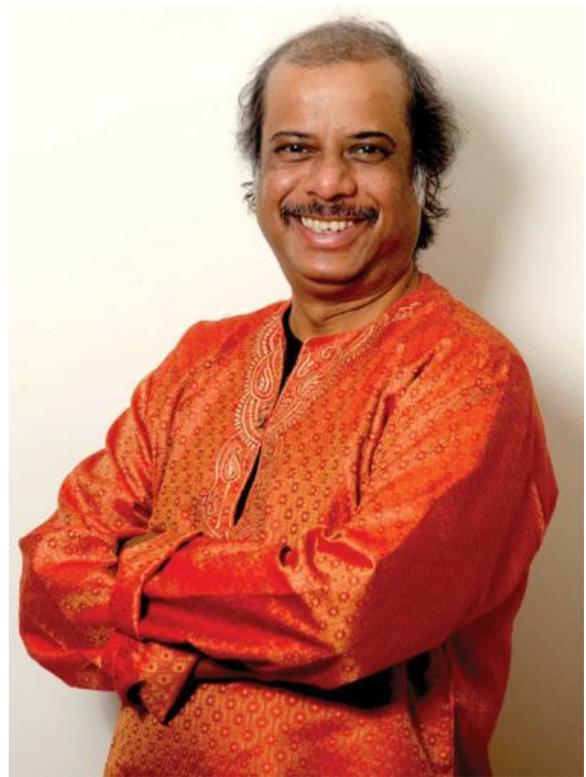
I am also excited in premiering new works for the Toronto Tabla Ensemble in the upcoming season, which will be presented in multiple location across the GTA. Over the past six months we conducted intense one-week courses at four Toronto Elementary Schools, under the Ontario Arts Council's Artist in Education program. Our teachers worked with six to 16-year-olds to compose their own music and dance, which each class then performed for their whole school on day 5. We are grateful for the support of Ontario Arts Council, Roden Public School, Equinox Public School and Winchester Public School.

I would like to thank the Pirani family for organizing and hosting a very successful fundraising event. The proceeds went towards funding school expansion, and launching an advertising campaign on the Bloor Subway line.

And finally, I would like to say a big thank you to the board, teachers, and volunteers for your continued effort in helping this organization excel. Every member of the TTE community is an integral one. I feel confident that the level of commitment you brought to the past year will carry us forward to even greater artistic heights in the future.



Ritesh Das
Artistic Director



WHAT IS TABLA ?

Tabla is the most prolific drum in South Asia owing to its versatility as a solo and accompanying instrument in all forms of music and dance.

The smaller wooden drum is called tabla and the larger bass drum of copper or clay, bayan. The stretched skin and layered black gaab give the drums their unique tonal variation.

Everything that is played on the drum is represented by a spoken syllable known as bol. The tabla has a special place in North Indian (Hindustani) classical music, which is mostly improvised. However, there are a large number of fixed compositions that have been passed from teacher to student for centuries.

QUICK FACTS

- Founded in **1991** by Ritesh Das, with more than **800 students** taught
- Over **20 self presented concerts** throughout Canada, including 13 home season performances at Harbourfront Centre, Toronto
- Participated in more than **8 major festival tours** in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia
- Featured collaboration with Jeff Martin of the Tea Party at the **World Leaders Tribute concert** for Peter Gabriel
- Composed and recorded **CBC Metro Music theme** music launched September 2002 in collaboration with Donald Quan
- **International Tour** with Jeff Martin throughout Ireland, Norway and Australia

PERFORMANCE AND COLLABORATION

- Kaeja d'Dance
- Kiyoshi Nagata Taiko Ensemble
- Rita di Ghent
- Esmeralda Enrique Spanish Dance Company
- Hari Krishnan
- The Tea Party
- Chhandam Dance Company

5 ALBUMS

- Alankar, 2008
- Weaving, 2001
- Firedance, 1999 - nominated for a JUNO award for best Global Album
- Second Palla, 1998
- Toronto Tabla Ensemble, 1996

3 MUSIC VIDEOS

- 'Funky 10' - nominated MuchMusic Video 1997 Global Groove Award
- 'Asahi' – nominated for two 1998 Gemini awards
- 'Firedance' – winner of the 2001 Yorkton Short Film Festival



IN 2013...

- Our student population in suburban areas has increased by **25%** with a steady increase in our downtown student base
- The number of students below the age of 15 has more than **doubled**
- Our income from performances has increased by **70%**
- We kicked off our fundraising efforts raising over **\$5,000**
- **Tripled** our fan base all over the world through consistent social media campaigns



2013 HIGHLIGHTS

Heartbeat: Artists in Education



In this five-day program, students developed their original ideas into a collective musical and dance piece, while meeting several curricular objectives.

This project enhanced team-building skills and self-esteem, and left students with a fulfilling sense of personal and group accomplishment. On the last day of the program, the students performed their original work for the school community.

This program was funded in part by the Ontario Arts Council.



Two New Branch Locations: Scarborough and Mississauga

This has enabled us to reach out to a younger audience and families need no longer travel to our downtown centre.

In September 2013 we launched two new teaching locations in Scarborough and Mississauga. At our Open House we were joined by a lot of new and returning students, happy to find a class closer to their home. Classes are held at Stephen Leacock Collegiate in Scarborough and Queen Elizabeth Public School in Mississauga.



Overcoming: Nuit Blanche Project



Five days of rehearsal, one day of audio recording, and two days of filming, came together in one spectacular night as a Nuit Blanche premiere!

Visual artist Max Dean, and composer Joel S. Silver collaborated with members of the Toronto Tabla Ensemble to create *Overcoming*. *Overcoming* was projected on the hospital walls, all along University Avenue from dusk till dawn at Nuit Blanche in Toronto. Artistic Director Ritesh Das has incorporated a piece in the rhythmic cycle of five and a half beats, adding a dynamic and exciting layer to this project.

Overcoming will soon be coming to galleries and museums across the country.

Amar Pujo Toronto

For the second year in a row, the Toronto Tabla Ensemble took to the main stage of 'Amar Pujo Toronto' celebration.

Over three hundred people of all ages came to celebrate the goddess 'Durga'. The Toronto Tabla Ensemble kept the audience in awe throughout the performance.





Charitable Registration Number: 86032 2445 RR0001

1175 Lansdowne Avenue, Toronto ON, M6H 3Z7 Canada

1-888-95-TABLA (1-888-958-2252)

info@torontotabla.com

www.torontotabla.com