

Kinsmen/Svajanam
with
Saxophonists Kadri Gopalnath and Rudresh Mahanthappa

Thursday, November 15, 7:00 pm

Wang Center Theater
Stony Brook University

Two masters of the alto saxophone—one a living legend of South Indian Carnatic music and the other a fiercely innovative Indian American jazz musician—present a performance suite commissioned by the Asia Society. A recognized innovator, Kadri Gopalnath introduced and adapted a relatively new western instrument to the traditions of Indian Carnatic music. Rudresh Mahanthappa fuses a myriad of contemporary and traditional influences, drawing on his Indian ancestry and using American jazz as his foundation, into highly improvisational work. The distinction between their respective influences, training and idiom is both complicated and enhanced by their shared South Indian heritage as well as their common vehicle of the alto saxophone. The two are joined by their co-led Dakshina Ensemble including Kanya Kumari (violin), Rez Abassi (guitar/sitar-guitar), Carlo de Rosa (acoustic bass), Gautam Siram (*mrdangam* or barrel drum) and Eliot Humberto Kavee (drums).

“This exciting work takes listeners to a new place where jazz and classical Indian music come together,” says Rachel Cooper, Director of Cultural Programs and Performing Arts at Asia Society. “Their collaboration bridges differing traditions, influences, generations and cultures, taking listeners on a ground-breaking artistic journey that is timeless, transnational and represents India today.”

Tickets: Four for the Price of Three: \$75.00—Sponsor Tickets: VIP seating, priority, and assigned seating; \$45.00—General Admission; \$30.00—Students and Seniors **Individual tickets for each performance:** \$10 for students and seniors; \$15 general admission; \$25 VIP The commission is made possible by the Multi-Arts production Fund, a program of Creative Capital supported by the Rockefeller Foundation. Major support for performances at the Asia Society is provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Helen and Will Little Endowment for Performing Arts. Call the Wang Center at (631) 632-4400 or visit the website at www.stonybrook.edu/wang.

Kadri Gopalnath has been a true phenomenon in the world of Indian classical music. In 1975 Gopalnath went to Madras where he tutored the saxophone by the renowned musician, T. V. Gopalakrishnan. In 1977, he gave his first concert in Madras. His fame soon spread throughout India where he has frequently been the highlight of festivals and concerts. He grew in stature as a figure of immense popularity not only in India, but throughout the world. Gopalnath had to make certain improvisations to the conventional saxophone instrument in order to play the culturally unique Carnatic music of South India. Gopalnath has had the opportunity to participate in major festivals and presentations around the world, including the Music Halle Festival in France, the International Cervantino Festival in Mexico, the Berlin Jazz Festival, and the World Music Institute in New York. He has played with many leading jazz musicians including the saxophonist, John Handy. He was the first South Indian classical musician to be invited to perform in the BBC Promer concert in 1994. He has also toured the USA, Europe, Australia and South East Asia extensively. He has been awarded many important titles including Saxophone Chakravarthy, The Emperor of Saxophone. His performances often receive audience and critical acclaim.

Named a Rising Star of the alto saxophone by the 2003 and 2004 Downbeat International Critics Poll, **Rudresh Mahanthappa** is one of the most innovative young musicians in jazz today. By incorporating the culture of his Indian ancestry, Rudresh has fused myriad influences to create a truly groundbreaking artistic vision. As a performer, he leads/co-leads five groups to critical acclaim. His most recent quartet recording *Mother Tongue* on Pi Recordings has been named one of Top Ten Jazz CDs of 2004 by the Chicago Tribune, All About Jazz, and Jazzmatazz to name a few. As a performer, Mahanthappa has achieved international recognition performing regularly at jazz festivals and clubs worldwide. He has also worked as a sideman with such jazz luminaries as David Murray, Steve Coleman, Jack DeJohnette, Samir Chatterjee, Von Freeman, Tim Hagans, Fareed Haque, Vijay Iyer, Howard Levy, David Liebman, Greg Osby, and Dr. Lonnie Smith. As a composer, Rudresh has received commission grants from the Rockefeller Foundation MAP Fund, American Composers Forum, and the New York State Council on the Arts to develop new work. Mahanthappa has his Bachelor of Music Degree in jazz performance from Berklee College of Music and his Masters of Music degree in jazz composition from Chicago's DePaul University. He now teaches at The New School University. Rudresh Mahanthappa currently lives in New York where he is clearly regarded as an important and influential voice in the jazz world.