

Ahimsa • south Indian Classic & Jazz (D, Madras)



Ahimsa is a four-piece ensemble based in India and Germany. Their music is a captivating fusion of Indian Carnatic music and jazz, played on guitar, violin and North and South Indian Percussion instruments. Ahimsa is a brilliant combination of musicians; South Indian violin star **Neyveli S. Radhakrishna** and German jazz guitarist **Matthias Muller** accompanied by masters of percussion from both Southern Carnatic and Northern Hindustani India, **R. Yogaraja** on Mrudangam and Ganjira and **Udai Mazumdar** on Tabla.



Ahimsa resulted in 1999 from a chance meeting between guitarist Matthias Muller and violinist S. Radhakrishna, which then blossomed into friendship, mutual admiration, and musical partnership.

With the addition of two percussionists of R. Yogaraja, A. S. Shankar and Armin Metz on Bass; Ahimsa recorded their first CD 2000 in Germany 'Seven steps to liberty-step one', released at earslovemusic-rec., which received world wide critical acclaim. The second CD 'What is the nature of spirit ?' recorded 2003 is released at acoustis-music-rec.. Later Udai Mazumdar replaced A. S. Shankar on Percussion.

In Ahimsa's fierce compositions, the complex rhythmic structures and raga improvisations are balanced with the harmonic diversity of western classical music and the unlimited expression of jazz. Their forte presents enchanting and daring improvisational music played with such virtuosity that it is reminiscent of the group "Shakti" and at the same time gives a fresh and innovative impetus and is unique to Ahimsa.

The Sanskrit word Ahimsa denotes non-violence, compassion, love and reverence for all beings and all forms of life.

CD's:

„Seven Steps to Liberty – Step One“ (re-release 2008)
“What is the nature of spirit ” (2003)

Ahimsa in the internet: www.crossculturemusic.de/xahimsa.html

Press comments

“If one searches for the most successful examples with violinists, one will always find the virtuosi Dr. L. Subramaniam and L. Shankar (...) **You can add another bridge builder’s name**, also rooted in the southindian tradition: the violinist Neyveli S. Radhakrishna.“ *Rondo plus, 5/08*

„The five-member German-Indian Ensemble, centered round the violinist Neyveli S. Radhakrishna, primarily made a name for themselves at the European jazz scene. They’re responsible for **a pulsating mix** of southindian classic and western-style improvisation.“ *City – Stadtzeitung für Wien, 2002 Nr. 39*

„... elaborated unisono melodies and insane tempo with an easiness ... any progressive-metal band would go pale ... **World music on World class Level.**“
Hildesheimer Allgemeine, July 2003

„Ahimsa has **developed a musical matrix all its own**. Pulsating and soothing at once, a music which fills the million labyrinths of the man’s mind to make the spirits soar!
Sheetal Mukarjea, 2006, Allahabad, India

„Responsibility for the Indian part of the music fell to the percussionist R. Yogaraja and violin virtuoso Neyveli S. Radhakrishna. **Yogaraja accompanied his band mates entrancingly** on various small drums and tambourines, as well as on the south Indian mrudangam, which is a melodiously reminiscent of the north-Indian tabla. **Radhakrishna amazes** with an electric double-necked violin, on which one of the necks is tuned in a normal violin position and the other is considerably lower, somewhat in a viola’s position with a dark, warm tone. Ahimsa’s jazz contingent was entrusted to guitarist **Matthias Müller, who played his instrument practically as well as John McLaughlin** did back then. Finally comes bassist Armin Metz, allowing his fingers to dance with nothing short of brilliance over his six-stringed fretless-bass.“ *Basler Zeitung, Rolf De Marchi, Basel 2006*

„**virtuous sound masters**, intensive soundscapes, tight, “phrase shifted” rhythmical Structures...“ *FLZ, May-31 2003*

„**true masters ... very lively, light and unbelievable powerful** ... their Music moved the devotedly listening crowd. ... extraordinary musical impetus...“ *Süddeutsche Zeitung Oct. ’02*

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musicians

Neyveli S. Radhakrishna - Double violin

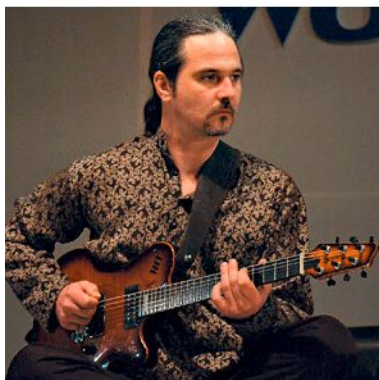
Radha has played the violin since he was 8 years old. He studied with the violin-maestro Dr. M. Chandrasekaran and later graduated from the Annamalai University in India. At the age of thirteen he won first price in a national Indian Violin competition and also won the 'Krishna Gana Shabha-Award' in South India for young performing artists.



Recently he was honored with the 'Kanchi Kama Koti Peeta Asthanam' award which is a prestigious honor for musicians in south India. Radha is well-versed, playing classical Indian music as well as contemporary styles such as Jazz and Fusion. He plays a unique double neck ten stringed violin. His captivating, unusual style and improvisational skills have led him to play with some of the worlds greatest, such us: **Pandit Ravi Shankar, Anoushka Shankar, Jonas Hellborg** and **V. Selvaganesh** to name a few. He also played in the album 'Soukha' with **John McLaughlin, Ustad Zakir Hussain** and mandolin wizard **U. Srinivas**.

In addition to appearances on Indian radio and television, Radha extensively tours the world. He has played in many festivals and in the world's most prestigious halls such as the Carnegie-Hall, NY, Disney-Hall, LA, among others.

Matthias Müller - Guitar, Composer, Arranger



Matthias Müller is a music graduate from the College of Music Sulzbach-Rosenberg, 'Munich Guitar Institute' and the 'Grove School of Music' in Los Angeles. He studied Classical & Jazz Guitars, as well as conducting, composing and arranging.

During his long carrier as a musician and composer Matthias has played concerts all around the world in wide variety of styles, including Classical, Jazz and Fusion. He has composed for film & theatre and played guitar in many recording sessions.

Matthias strong interest in Indian classical music has led him to study the Carnatic Music (South Indian style) from some of the best Indian musicians. Ahimsa was created by both Matthias and Radha from their strong passion to mix and blend the Indian classical music with western influences, such as Jazz and Fusion.

Matthias has played with some of the top Indian musicians of our generation, such as; **Dr. L. Subramaniam, Sivamani, Salil Bhatt and Tanmoy Bose** along with many others. Recently, Matthias has recorded a new guitar trio album with Grammy Award Indian guitarist **Vishwa Mohan Bhatt**.

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Udai Mazumdar – Tabla

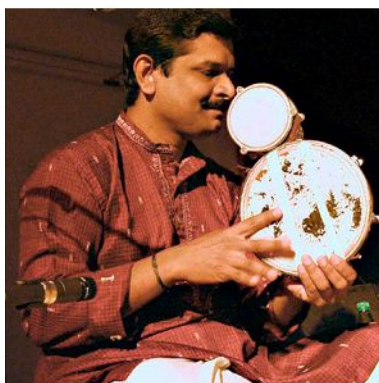
Udai hails from a family of fine musicians of Allahabad (north India). His father, the Late Partho Sarathy Mazumdar is among the first-generation of Indian Classical guitarists. At 6 years old Udai started his vocal training in classical Indian music and a year later he picked up and started to play the Tabla (most popular Hindustani/North Indian percussion instrument). In 1989 Udai moved to Delhi to further his musical experience and he became one of the six disciples of Pandit Ravi Shankar. He lived with this world-renowned Sitar Maestro and learned directly from him the intricate art of Tabla accompaniment.



Udai is a skilled musician with a sensitive approach. His evocative and expressive melodic and rhythmic playing as well as his dedication and commitment to the classical music genre has made him equally sought after as both a soloist and an accompanist. He has played with some of the most noteworthy Indian masters such as; Pandit **Ravi Shankar** (performing before the Royal Families of England and Sweden), with Ustad **Zakir Hussain** (in a concert to mark Pt. Ravi Shankar's 75th birthday), with **Hariprasad Chaurasia**, **Siv Kumar Sharma** and **Ustad Ashish Khan** to name a few. Udai also played with western musicians such as; **Paul Giger**, Massimo Marcelli, Carlo Bocardo among others. He has also been featured in many Radio & TV's station around the world, including the Radio DRS, Switzerland, Radio France and the BBC. He participated in many recordings and performed in many festivals all around the world.

Currently he is based in Basel, Switzerland, engaging in performances, composing and teaching; and he continues to spend time and learn with Pandit Ravi Shankar during his regular visits to New Delhi.

R. Yogaraja – Multi percussion, Mrudangam, Ganjira, Morsing



At a very young age, Yoga was trained in Mrudangam (main south Indian Carnatic drum comparable to Tabla) by his father, the Master A.S. Ramanathan.

To further his education he studied at the 'Annamalai University' in Chidambaram. During that time he adopted and mastered his technique with other percussion instruments such as the Kanjira (small hand-drum with a huge range of pitches), Ghatam (Clay pot), Morsing (traditional south Indian mouth harp), as well as Tabla, African and Latin American percussion instruments.

His diversity and unique playing style attracted some of the world's greatest musicians. Yoga has accompanied many famous musicians including maestro **Yehudi Menuhin**, **Stephan Grapelli** and **Dr. L. Subramaniam**. He has played all around the world in major halls and events with such as the London Philharmonic and he has appeared in many Indian Radio and TV-Station.

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Performances (choice)

2009

Congo Square Jazz Festival Kolkata (ind), **Stein Auditorium** New Delhi (ind)

2008

Woodstock Poland Przystanek (pol), **Baltic Sea Festival** (pol), **Open Secret** San Rafael CA (usa), Ashkenaz Berkeley CA (usa), Soho Santa Barbara CA (usa), Skirball Cultural Center Los Angeles CA (usa), WorldBeat Cultural Center San Diego CA (usa)

2007

Music Academy Chennai (ind), Kulturzentrum Kesselhaus, Weil am Rhein (ger), **Woodstock Poland** Przystanek (pol), St.Andreas Kirche Hildesheim (ger)

2006

Sufi-Music-Festival New Delhi (ind), Culturall India Allahabad (ind), **Siemens** - Forum Erlangen (ger), Begegnungen der Kulturen Stuttgart (ger), Passionskirche Basel (ch) Meck a Frick (ch), **Dunya Festival** Rotterdam (nl), Pfarreizentrum Barfüsser Luzern (ch) Vorstadttheater im Eisenwerk Frauenfeld (ch), Centre Paroissial De St.Jacques Lausanne (ch), Saal Beau Rivage Thun (ch), Theater am Waaghaus Winterthur (ch), **La Fiesta La Liberte** Payerne (ch)

2005

Festival de Rencontres de Folklore Internationales Tabla Fribourg (CH), **Weltjugendtag** Bonn

2004

Traube Ottikon (CH), Meck a Frick (CH), **India Music Festival** Bern (CH), Andreanum Hildesheim, Pfarrsaal Sarstedt

2003

Kulturzentrum Langendreer Bochum, Jazzclub Erfurt, Trilke Hildesheim, **Moving Cultures** Schwabach, Klezmer-Festival Salzgitter, Kik Ried Am Innkreis (A), Tagore-Center Berlin, Kammerspiele Ansbach, Charivari, Ulm, **Szene Wien** (A), Malzhaus Plauen

2002

Unterfahrt München, Kulturfabrik Löseke Hildesheim, **Sargfabrik** Wien (A), Kulturforum Salzstadel Landshut, Nacht der Kulturen Schweinfurt, Jazzherbst Heidenheim, Trilke Hildesheim, Kulturhaus Saarwellingen, Tagore-Center Berlin, Kulturhaus Witten, Wine and Jazz Kuga (A), Stockwerk Jazz Graz (A), Gruppe 02 Lambach (A), Bongo Bar Bad Zell (A), Kik Ried Am Innkreis (A), **Limitations** Rudolfstein (A)