

Pandit Shubhendra Rao is an internationally acclaimed performer, composer, cultural entrepreneur and music educator. His relentless service in promoting Indian music has made him a highly respected figure in the field of music and education across the world. A protégé of Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar, Shubhendra Rao has established himself “not only as a master of his instrument but also as a thinking musician, constantly endeavouring to carry his instrument beyond conventional boundaries” and “a musical bridge to many cultures” Critics and connoisseurs hail him as a worthy successor to his Guru’s tradition.

Internationally, he has performed at major music festivals and prestigious concert halls like Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, Sydney Opera House, Salzburg International Music festival, National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, National Arts Festival in South Africa, BRICS Summit in China, Theatre de le Ville in Paris. In India, Shubhendra Rao has performed at major music festivals in India including Doverlane Music Conference, ITC Sangeet Sammelan, Baba Harvallabh Sangeet Mahasabha, Shankarlal Festival, Gunidas Sammelan, Sankat Mochan Sammarroh, Kashi Utsav, Swami Haridas Sammellan.

Leading universities invite him as a guest teacher to give lecture-demonstrations about Indian music. His international tours have taken him to North and South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, most countries in Europe, and many Asian countries. In November 2007, he was awarded the “*Youth Icon for Classical Music*” by the popular Zee Television Network. In 2014, the Arts and Culture Society awarded him the ‘*Delhi Ratna*’ award. In 2018, he was awarded the ‘*PHD Art and Culture Samman*’ by the PHD Chamber of Commerce. In September 2018, he was also awarded the first ‘*Atal Behari Vajpayee National Award*’ for his contribution to Art and Culture. In February 2019, he was awarded the prestigious “*Art Karat Award for Excellence*” for his contribution in the field of Arts.



*Did you know that Shubhendra used to practice 14 hours every day as a student?
You can ask him about the importance of practice.*

A child prodigy who started playing sitar at the age of 3, he grew up in a musical family. His mother Nagarathna is a Saraswati Veena player. His father, N.R.Rama Rao, a disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar himself, was his first Guru. Shubhendra had his first lesson from his Guru Pandit Ravi Shankar at the age of 7. At the age of 18, he moved to Delhi, living with and learning from his Guru in the traditional Guru-Shishya parampara.

As a budding artist, he was the recipient of Youth State scholarship for music, Karnataka in 1975 and National scholarship for music from Ministry of culture in 1977. An A Grade artist of All India Radio for over 25yrs, Shubhendra Rao is a regular performer on Radio and National Television.

As a composer Shubhendra Rao distinguishes himself to push to boundaries of classical music and creating music for artists across cultures. He has composed for and worked with Dutch Cellist, Saskia Rao-de Haas, American Jazz Guitarist Freddie Bryant, Iranian musicians, Japanese legendary singer Ryoko Moriyama, Chinese Pipa maestro Gao Hong, Bilbao Symphony Orchestra, Chinese National Orchestra and Sinfónica de Castilla y León amongst others.



Leading magazines and newspapers like India Today, the Hindu, and Indian Express invite Shubhendra Rao to write articles as an expert on music, music education and his guru's music.

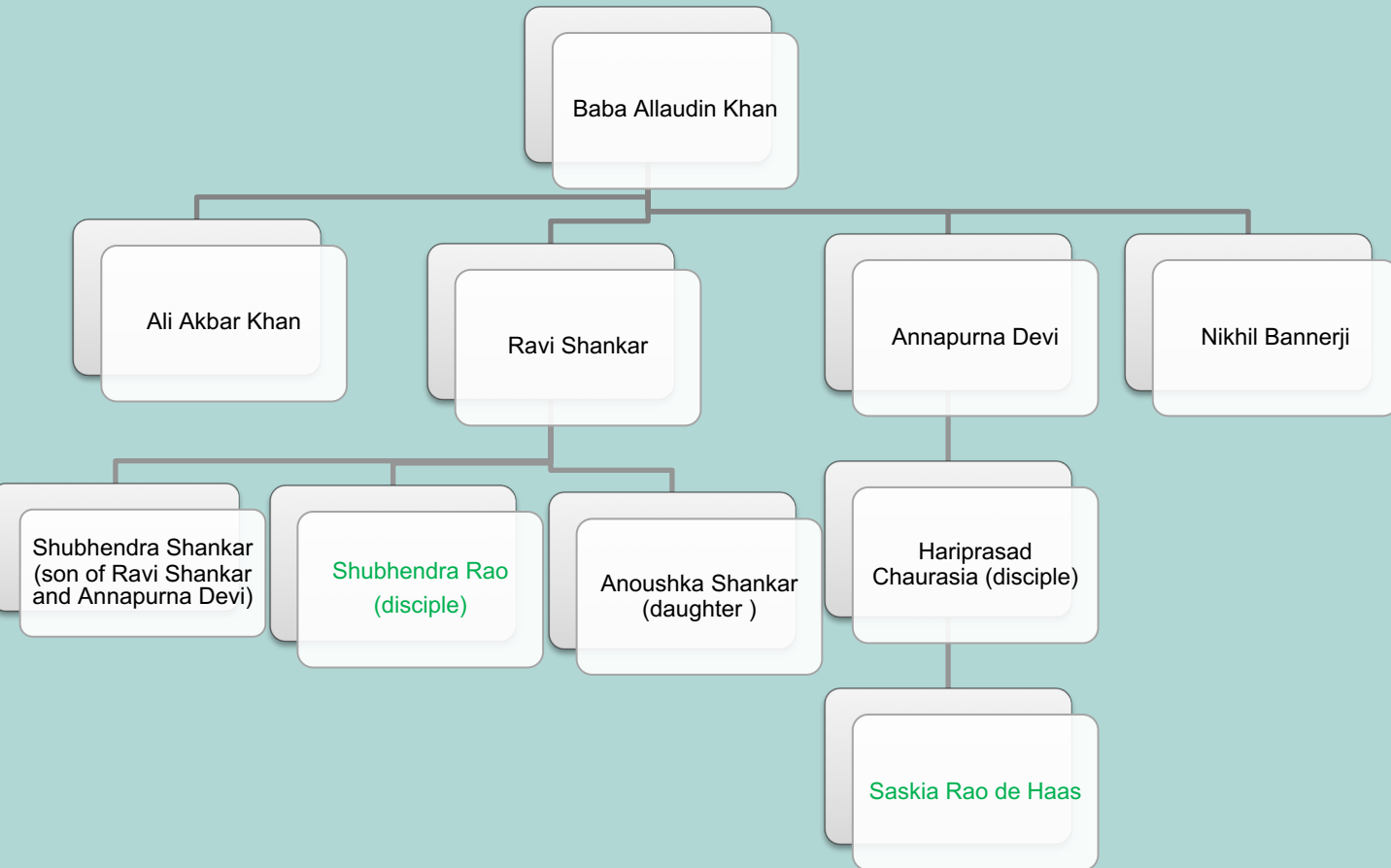
He is an active supporter as a performing artist for SPICMACAY for the past 30years, performing over 50 concerts every year.

As an empaneled Guru and performer of ICCR, Shubhendra Rao has trained many foreign students who, in turn, are teaching Indian music across the world.

In his own words, *"Music is a gift bestowed on me since childhood. Knowing and realizing its power, I wish to bring the joy of music into every child's life, not necessarily to make him/her into a musician but to make him/her a better and sensitive human being".*

What instrument does Pt Shubhendra Rao play? What is his philosophy about Music? Is it only for few, or for everyone?

The Maihar Gharana: Shubhendra and Saskia Rao within the Maihar Gharana



The Maihar gharana was founded by Ustad Allaudin Khan, lovingly called Baba by. Baba was the Guru to many of the 20th century most influential instrumentalists. From his own son, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, his daughter, Vidushi Annapurna Devi, and, as we saw, of Pt Ravi Shankar. He also guided Pt. V.G. Jog, Smt Sharan Rani, Pt Nikhil Bannerji, Pt, Pannalal Ghosh and many others.

The Maihar gharana is sometimes called the Senia Maihar gharana in homage to Baba's Guru Ustad Wazir Khan. Baba Allaudin Khan ran away from home as a young lad to pursue learning music. In his journey, he picked up many instruments and learned Indian and Western classical music and even folk and theatre music from Bengal. His main instrument was the sarod, but he also mastered many other instruments. He founded the Maihar band, an ensemble he hand picked and trained in the small town of Maihar to promote ensemble and orchestra playing within the Indian music idiom.

His discipline and dedication to practice was famous. Stories about him emptying candles to keep a track of undisturbed practice, or tying his hair to the ceiling to remain awake are told among artists in reverence to his dedication. His strictness with his disciples came from this dedication.

Who is the founder of the Maihar gharana?