

Debashish Bhattacharya

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

India

One of the world's greatest slide guitar players performs his borderless take on traditional Indian music



Photo: Debashish Bhattacharya © Kunal Sarkar

"Bhattacharya's extraordinary note-bending artistry, set against a droning heat haze of tamboura sound. You can almost see his fingers sliding over the strings as he teases exquisite, metallic tendrils of sound from them."
BBC

Debashish Bhattacharya, considered by many to be the world's greatest slide guitar player, brings his borderless take on traditional Indian music to his Sydney Festival debut.

Grammy-nominated **Debashish Bhattacharya's** revolutionary arrangements blend traditional raga with global influences, resulting in an electric sound. Accompanied by his daughter **Anandi** on vocals, renowned percussionist **Tanmoy Bose** and special guest **Jeff Lang**, Bhattacharya's music showcases the past, present and future of Indian music. Trained in Hindustani classical music, Bhattacharya also injects a good dose of the blues into his work as racing melodies and frenetic beats deliver sounds straight from the soul.

With the desire to accommodate the expansive soundscapes of the Indian origin, Bhattacharya created the *Hindustani* slide guitar. The unique construction is inspired by the Hawaiian lap steel guitar, an instrument he started experimenting with at the age of three. The 51-year-old musician has invented his own slide guitars that are unique to his compositions, calling them the trinity of guitars. Adding chikaris and sympathetic strings, the 24 string instrument is positioned across the legs, and uses a sliding metal bar to produce the fluid melodies. The instrument's evolution continues to this day, with Bhattacharya continuing to create revolutionary versions to suit his transformative styles.

A musician, composer, innovator, revolutionary and Guru, Bhattacharya is based in the West Bengal city of Kolkata, where he runs his own 'School of Universal Music'. Incorporating North Indian classical music and a variety of music genres, he does not believe in the separation of eastern and western styles. *Universal Human Music* is his faith and he believes that it brings peace and joy to those who embrace it.

Playing for All India Radio by age four, Debashish Bhattacharya studied under the father of Indian classical guitar, **Brij Bhushan Kabra**, as well as vocalists **Ajoy Chakrabarty** and **Ali Akbar Khan**. Since gaining his renown, Bhattacharya has worked on a number of guitar tours and multicultural projects, most notably **John McLaughlin's Shakti** and with slide guitar master **Bob Brozman**. In 2003, Bhattacharya released *Mahima* with Brozman, fusing Hawaiian and Indian music. He has won the BBC Planet Award for World Music in 2001 and was nominated for a Grammy in 2009.

MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY FESTIVAL 2015

8-26 JAN

Where	City Recital Hall, Angel Place
When	15 January at 8:00pm
Price	Premium \$65 A Reserve \$55/\$50 B Reserve \$39/\$35
Duration	90 minutes no interval
Bookings	Sydney Festival 1300 856 876 City Recital Hall 02 8256 2222 sydneyfestival.org.au/debashish

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