

Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar
Vrindavan 1982



USTAD ZIA MOHIUDDIN DAGAR Vrindavan 1982

Label

BLACK TRUFFLE

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NORTH AMERICAN EXCLUSIVE

Genre

FILE UNDER - D - WORLD



DESCRIPTION

Black Truffle presents a previously unheard performance by rudra veena master **Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar**, recorded in the North Indian city of Vrindavan at the Druhpad Samaroh festival in 1982. The great exponents of the tradition from whom Z.M. Dagar descended were all singers, and dhrupad is essentially vocal music. However, as Z.M. Dagar explained, the veena family of instruments plays an important role in the education and practice of dhrupad singers, especially as an aid to mastering the fine microtonal nuances of pitch essential to the genre. In the great Dagar family tradition, his approach to the various ragas that make up the dhrupad repertoire was stately, slow, and considered, with a great emphasis on the alap, the heavily improvised exposition section. True to form, in this recording of Dagar performing the night raga Yaman Kalyan, the alap section stretches out to more than forty minutes of slow-motion bliss, a frozen tanpura drone hovering above Dagar's gracefully bent notes and elegantly twisting phrases. In the alap's first half, Dagar's figures are so intently focused on the lower reaches of the rudra veena's range that they register more as shudders and moans than melodic patterns. As the performance continues, he slowly climbs in pitch, though continuing with the same intent focus on the articulation of single notes and subtle microtonal variations. This leads to the jod section of the performance, which, though still accompanied only by the tanpura, gradually takes on a more rhythmic character. Developing almost imperceptibly over the course of nearly thirty minutes, the jod moves from the stillness of the opening alap to a rapid pulse that announces the closing section of the piece, where Dagar is joined by **Shrikant Mishra** on the pakhawaj (a double headed hand drum). Where many performers use the final section of the raga as an exercise in unrestrained virtuosity, Dagar and Mishra subtly weave a web of finely shifting accents and hypnotic melodic variations, bringing the recording to a fitting conclusion while remaining within the meditative space occupied by the performance as a whole. Adorned with beautiful archival photographs of Dagar taken by Swedish percussion legend **Bengt Berger** and accompanied by detailed notes from **Bradford Bailey**, *Vrindavan 1982* is a stunning document of music unmatched in its patient focus and mysterious emotional depth.

TRACKLISTING

- A1. Alap Part 1 (20:22)
- B1. Alap Part 2 (21:45)
- C1. Jod (19:59)
- D1. Jhala & Chautala (12 Beats) (18:04)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Previously unheard performance by rudra veena master **Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar**, recorded in the North Indian city of Vrindavan at the Druhpad Samaroh festival in 1982.
- Dagar is joined by **Shrikant Mishra** on the pakhawaj (a double headed hand drum).
- Includes archival photographs of Dagar taken by Swedish percussion legend **Bengt Berger** and accompanied by detailed notes from **Bradford Bailey**.

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