

**Hindustani Music:
Towards Research-Oriented Practice**

A Two-Day Online Workshop

Conducted By

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Our collective memory suggests that there has been a wide chasm between the practitioners of Hindustani music and those involved in its theory. Even though the practice and theory of this musical system have been taught for several decades in the institutionalized training format followed in universities and music schools, albeit the standard of such an education not always keeping up with public expectations, there still seems to be a general tendency between practitioners and academicians to view each other with a degree of suspicion, competition, and even downright condemnation. This mutual distrust seems to stem out of a notion that the practice of Hindustani music is entirely based on an oral tradition of transmission and osmosis and that its theoretical counterpart is based on a textual tradition. Both are considered mutually exclusive areas and are believed to be best left as such.

However, history informs us that practitioners have always theorized. They may or may not have articulated their ideas through texts or through the spoken word, but their practice amply demonstrates the evolution of these ideas. Their ideas have emerged out of the personalized instruction given through the guru-shishya or mentor-disciple format of training or by way of a conscious or subconscious exchange of ideas, but above all, they are the result of the creative impulse displayed by practitioners. Clearly, the trajectory of this system of music has been shaped by the experimentation that path-breakers have undertaken, thus firmly establishing through their work that Hindustani music is not an inflexible and monolithic entity that has been passed down generations in a perceived original form dating back several millennia. Similarly, the theory of Hindustani music has evolved due to efforts of theoreticians, who closely examined contemporary practice of music, compared it with its past and at times even debated about its future.

Keeping this historical reality in perspective, this two-day workshop attempts at closing the gap between the practice and theory of Hindustani music, by inviting practitioners to revisit their work and its history, to discuss the larger socio-cultural, political and economic context in which they are making music, and to share their current artistic preoccupations. The four sessions to be held in this workshop will focus on ways in which practitioners can actively re-examine their creative practice and think of ways in which they can bring to the fore research questions and engage with research methodology to extend the boundaries of their creative practice.

SESSION I

Socio-cultural, political and economic contexts for Hindustani music practice

SESSION II

Research methodology: Accessing libraries, archives, museums and private collections

SESSION III

Musical and textual analysis

SESSION IV

Discussion on selected topics chosen from the research questions/preoccupations shared by applicants