



Indian Raga Music

The Tabla

Shubhasis Bhattacharjee:

In tabla we have... we have two drums here, we call tabla and we call bayan because bayan means left drum. So left drum produces basically the lower frequency notes [or] syllables. So I am going to start with the bayan basic syllables are "ghe" and "ge", one is "ghe" and another is "ge" ... (plays) ... so we use always two fingers here like "ghe ge ghe ge" ... (plays) ... and we have another closed syllable like much more with treble sound like "ke" or "ka" ... On tabla we have first very basic syllable "na" and "ta" ... but there is difference, little but, "na" is quite softer sound like "na" and when you speak "ta" it is much more... attack on it so "ta" is (plays) ... So 'na' and 'ta' and then some on the black spot we call "gab" ... on the gab there is a "te", "te" – two, so "na", "ta", "te", "te" – "dha", "dhin". "Dhin" always played on this part we call we call "sur" it sustains long but "ta" is much more high treble sound like... 'ta' (plays) ... so with the "ge" if I play "ta" is mixed "dha" ... So with the "dhin", it is "tin" and "ghe" – composition... (plays) ... (plays) ... and then a very important syllable called "tun" ... (plays) ... This is a different scale, so "ta" ... "tun" ... so ... (runs through syllables). Another syllable is "dhe" and "re" ... these are the most common syllable in our tabla.

Tintal is a cycle, sixteen beat cycle, like a clock, start at 1 ... (counts to 16) ... then 1 ... this is called "tintal" ... so (plays) "dha dhin dhin dha ..." I am starting from 1 ... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... etc ... (plays theka) ... sometimes we also play in ornamental style like ... (plays ornamented theka).