

Akshara Music Ensemble

INDIAN CLASSICAL INSPIRED - MADE IN NYC

Founded in 2008 by Carnatic musician Bala Skandan, Akshara Music Ensemble is a New York-based collective that brings the rhythmic and melodic depth of South India into conversation with the city's jazz and classical scenes.

By blending instruments like the hammered dulcimer and cello with the mridangam and bansuri, Akshara creates a "propulsive and cheery" sound that is as diverse as NYC itself. An Independent Music Award winner featuring Grammy-nominated artists, the ensemble has graced stages from the National Gallery of Art to Rockwood Music Hall, crafting a hybrid music of uncommon beauty and rigor.

Genre

World Music | Jazz | Indian Classical

Select Performances

Abington Presbyterian Church

Abington, PA (2025)

globalFEST

Lincoln Center, NYC (2025)

Lyric Chamber Music Society

The Kosciuszko Foundation, NYC (2024)

National Gallery of Art

Washington, DC (2023)

Chicago World Music Festival

Chicago, IL (2019)

Symphony Space

New York, NY (2018)

"In Time" Album Release Party

Drom, NYC (2017)

Rockwood Music Hall

New York, NYC (2016)

Press Quotes

Republic of Jazz

"Akshara creates space for evocative melodic exploration among mathematically elegant South Indian rhythms"

New York Music Daily

"dynamic, innovative, propulsively cheery instrumentals based on ancient Indian carnatic themes"

Jazz Weekly

"Reflective and graciously swinging"

SPIN

"Great album, one of the best..."



The Ensemble

Bala Skandan

Mridangam

Dave Eggar*

Cello

Max ZT*

Hammered Dulcimer

Nitin Mitta

Tabla

Jay Gandhi

Bansuri

Arun Ramamurthy

Violin

Kabilan Jeganathan

Kanjira

*Grammy-nominated artist

Social Media

Instagram

[@aksharamusic](#)

YouTube

[@aksharamusicensemble](#)

Soundcloud

[/aksharamusic](#)

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Booking Information

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Contact with Bala Skandan