

Rez Abbasi and Josh Feinberg's Naya Baaz

CHARM



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3	Bhairavi	GB4DA2300107
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Charm is the debut release from **Naya Baaz** - a groundbreaking new collaboration between two extraordinary musicians, both of whom have achieved a rare level of mastery in demanding musical traditions from opposite sides of the globe. Recent Guggenheim Fellow, **Rez Abbasi** moved from Karachi to California as a child and has built up a formidable reputation as a guitarist who combines his love of Jazz (evidenced on his last major release, 'Django-Shift') with an international array of influences from South Asia and beyond:

Josh Feinberg is one of a handful of Western musicians to excel at the challenging legacy of the Hindustani sitar, specializing in the Maihar Gharana style from North India, and also a jazz bass player who studied with Paul Bley and Dave Holland. 'Josh earnestly understands jazz harmony and chromaticism as well as Indian musical traditions' says Rez 'That's a very rare combination'. Completing the endlessly flexible line-up are **Jennifer Vincent's** bespoke five-string cello, opening up possibilities to add both basslines and melodies, and **Satoshi Takeishi's** specially augmented drumset.

Abbasi and Feinberg started bouncing musical ideas between themselves and soon realized they were entering uncharted territory. Rez states, 'No-one has played these kinds of chromatic melodies and harmonies on sitar before, but Josh had a luthier build him a special sitar that enabled us to bring the band's vision to fruition.' The writing was a true collaborative process as they explored the new possibilities opening up before them. **Charm** is the result - a suite of music that falls naturally into three sections, each with its own brief intro.

The high-octane 'Bekhayal' was the very first tune written by Rez that kicked off the project. 'It was the composition that galvanized the energy for the rest of the music because at first, we didn't think it could be played on sitar, but when Josh made it work, we knew the project would be special.' says Rez. 'Bhairavi' is the closest piece to traditional Indian music on the album: a short folk piece, composed in Sindh Bhairavim, which Rez and Josh freely play with, creating a jazz-inspired cycle of tension and release. 'Chick's Magnet' is Rez's punning tribute to the late Mr. Corea and his magnetic musical universe, borne aloft on a bed of cello and Satoshi's powerful drumming - 'Satoshi views the drums through the lens of a percussionist, so there's always a textural aspect in what he does.' says Rez.

The richly harmonic, cyclically grooving 'No Lack Thereof' references Eckhart Tolle's declaration of abundance within, while 'Charm' has all the charismatic presence and bluesy swagger of a Led Zeppelin track over Vincent's propulsive bassline - 'Jennifer plays a big role in the band: opening up the field with basslines verses bowed cello.' 'Make it so' has a melody that Feinberg wrote inspired by the harmonized chromatic lines of Bach. Josh says, 'After showing it to Rez, he harmonized it in a way that I never would have thought of and took the tune to a completely different and wonderful place. This was one of the collaborative highlights for me.'

'Emancipation' was something Feinberg wrote on the piano a few years ago with no intention of playing it on sitar, expanded and developed by Rez. As Josh states, 'I didn't think it was possible to play it on sitar but I guess I proved myself wrong!' A similar process created 'Reaching', with Josh adding daring diminished melodies to an initial idea by Rez to create a yearning lyrical feel. The album closes with 'Peony', a light classical melody composed by Feinberg, played as a duet with Abbasi's gospel-like harmonic enhancements.

Josh says, 'This project is the culmination of 38 years of a musical life in two worlds: allowing the walls that I've built between musics to start to come down'. It's a remarkable coming together of two major musical talents to create a truly unique statement, and a highly accessible and enjoyable album.



Personnel

Rez Abbasi
electric & acoustic guitars

Josh Feinberg
sitar

Jennifer Vincent
5-string cello

Satoshi Takeishi
drums

Album Credits

Recorded at
Samurai Hotel
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Mixed by
Michael Marciano/Rez Abbasi

Mastered by
Michael Marciano

Produced by
Rez Abbasi

Executive producer
Michael Janisch

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