

## Deepal Chodhari

Acclaimed as a Sangeet Visharad from Bhatkhande University via Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Mumbai), Deepal Chodhari has been pursuing the santoor since her school years from her principle guruji, Shri Dineshkumar Sampat (immediate disciple of Pandit Kartik Kumar). With the blessings of her guruji, she pursues the santoor with style evolved out of gayaki (vocal), gatkari (instrumental technique) and layakari (rhythmic improvisation). Dinesh ji is responsible for laying the foundation, evolving, and grooming Deepal ji into a santoor artist.

In order to diversify into different styles of learning the santoor, Deepalji was guided by the santoor maestro Rahul Sharma to study the santoor padhiti (style) of the legendary padma-vibhushan santoor maestro, Pandit Shivkumar Sharma with his senior disciple, Dr. Dhananjay Daithankar. She also took training from Shri Dilip Kale.

Her raga renderings on the santoor have a consistent clarity of tone & vigor. These styles of music compositions have been passed on from her guruji through Maihar gharana. Her solid foundation in Hindustani classical music also brings soulful emotions on the santoor with traditional(raagdari) patterns and compositions. She mastered the intricacies of the santoor in bridge setting, string setting, tuning, and using a combination of strings in the right gauges to bring the best quality of sound.

Gifted as a vocalist and an instrumentalist, she underwent vocal training during her Sangeet Visharad from Smt. Shashikala Kaikini at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Deepal has been honored by State level awards and has been felicitated from several renowned cultural organizations in India and USA. She has attained the New Jersey Folk Art Apprenticeship Award under the guidance of Smt. Mitali Bhawmik has also performed on National Television in India with her Guruji Shri Dinesh Kumar Sampat. She recently directed an instrumental ensemble with close to 30 instrumentalists, both western and Indian, to create a fusion of an Indian composition.

Deepal has performed successfully at various cultural organizations in India & USA. Some of which are Marathi Vishwa (USA), Princeton University (USA), Raag Rang (USA), Chhandayan (USA), Ragas Live Festival (NYC Radio), Phoenix Gharana (USA), Brooklyn Raga Massive (USA), Chinmaya Mission (USA), KaloI (USA), IIT Powai (Mumbai), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Mumbai), St. Xavier's College (Mumbai), University of Mumbai, Sophia College (Mumbai) and many more. During her college years, she won exquisite intercollegiate and state competitions in India at Malhar (St. Xavier's College), Kaleidoscope (Sophia College), University of Mumbai and many more.

In 2013, her article was published in the New Jersey newspaper claiming her to be the only female Santoor teacher in the tri-state area in preserving the rich heritage of one of the oldest instruments of India- the Santoor. Her students have won accolades and prizes in acclaimed Hindustani Classical music events and competitions. She trains students for curriculum-based learning for Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal and SAMVED certification exams.

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