

7/13/23 Music Hour Recap

Last week, we were lucky to have Steve Gorn show us the Bansuri flute! He specializes in classical Northern Indian music, which is characterized by *raga*, which literally means 'to color the mind,' and musically refers to a specific collection of pitches. Steve began the session by performing a short excerpt and explaining how this style of music includes an ostinato line/drone (a series of notes that are repeated throughout the piece) from which the melody grows and returns back to at the end; he used the analogy of the spindles of a wheel all returning back to a center or the spindles of a Buddhist mandala all radiating from the center. One of our members described that the drone sounded like a harmonium, which Steve explained is commonly used as a drone within this style of music. Often times the flutist is responsible for pumping air for the harmonium during performances.

Next, Steve showed us how the Bansuri flute differs from Western ones: it is one solid piece of bamboo that is designed to mimic the human voice. In order to switch keys, the musician must switch to a different instrument size. Furthermore, these flutes are tuned to the just intonation system (there are unequal distances between every note that preserves the natural sound of overtones), while Western instruments are tuned to equal temperament (there is equal distance between every note).

If you would like to watch the recording of this music hour, you can do so here:

Video

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YOsflUve57mMC_aIci8pCUluhfNOYNTt/view?usp=sharing

Captions

https://drive.google.com/file/d/11-F_esXMIg0ezH5_59TOfkzNB_1kl71T/view?usp=sharing

If you would like to listen to more recordings of Steve's music, you can check out the link below:

<https://stevegorn.com/video/>