

## Shirish Korde - Biography

**Shirish Korde** is celebrated for “integrating and synthesizing music of diverse cultures into breathtaking works of complex expressive layers.” - Musical America. His music is influenced by diverse world music traditions ranging from the throat singers of Tuva and the ancient Vedic chants of India, to the shimmering colors of the Balinese Gong Kebyar Gamelan orchestra. His distinctive music is performed throughout the United States and Europe.

He has composed five large-scale music/theatre works including *Chitra* and *Rasa*, which weave the ancient traditions of South and South East Asia into complex multihued frameworks. *Rasa* was awarded an NEA opera grant and was premiered in 1999 by the **Da Capo Chamber Players** and the **New York Virtuoso Singers** at the Sonic Boom Festival at the Miller Theatre in New York. His most recent opera/dance drama, *Chitra*, commissioned by the **Boston Musica Viva** was presented by the Fleet Boston Celebrity Series in the spring of 2003, at the Tsai Performance Center, in Boston.

His close collaborations with musicians from diverse musical traditions are a hallmark of his distinctive voice. The recent violin concerto, *Svara-Yantra*, a collaboration with virtuoso violinist **Joanna Kurkowicz** and master tabla player, **Samir Chatterjee**, was premiered in Katowice, Poland by the **Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra** in the fall of 2005. A reviewer called *Svara-Yantra*, “a haunting work, richly imbued with Indian colors and musical tradition, which offers something unique and powerful with all manner of exotic and imaginative texture and color from both soloist and orchestra.”

In the 2007-8 season, the **Boston Philharmonic Orchestra** gave the U.S. Premiere of *Svara-Yantra*. There were several performances of the concerto under the direction of **Ben Zander**, featuring violinist **Joanna Kurkowicz** and tabla master **Samir Chatterjee**. In May 2008, the **Boston Musica Viva** presented the world premiere of *Songs of Ecstasy* featuring **Zorana Sadiq**, soprano, chamber ensemble and Indian classical dancer, **Wendy Jehlen**, at Tsai Performance Center at Boston University. The **Da Capo Chamber Players of New York** performed Korde’s commissioned work, *Blue Topeng 2*, for chamber ensemble and Balinese Gamelan soloists in a series of concerts in the spring of 2008 in New York. **Peggy Pierson** and **Windsor Music** will premiere a new oboe quartet in their series in Lexington, MA in the spring of 2009.

*Svara-Yantra* was performed by the **New Zealand Symphony Orchestra** in Wellington at the Asia Pacific Festival in New Zealand in February 2007, and the Koszalin Philharmonic in Poland in June 2007. This work was recently released on the **Chandos** label ([www.Chandos.net](http://www.Chandos.net)) as an mp3 and

on CD through [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and **Neuma Records** ([neumarecords.com](http://neumarecords.com)). *Nesting Cranes*, for flute and string orchestra, was premiered in the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Music NOW** series by flutist **Jennifer Gunn**, under the direction of **Ludovic Morlot**, in April of 2007. His other recent compositions include *Blue Topeng*, co-commissioned by the Fleet Boston Celebrity Series and **Boston Musica Viva**, which features the Balinese artist **Desak Made Suarti Laksmi** and **Bethany Collier**. They perform on specially designed Balinese gamelan instruments in combination with the soloists of the **Boston Musica Viva**. In the fall of 2004, several of his works were featured at the Exchange Festival of contemporary music at the House of World Cultures in Berlin featuring **The Ensemble Modern**. A song cycle based on the life of Phoolan Devi, India's Bandit Queen, which combines the classical traditions of North and South India with contemporary musical techniques was premiered by **Da Capo Chamber Players** at Merkin Hall, New York in June 2006.

Shirish Korde's grants and awards include: The National Flute Association, Composer's Inc., The Fuller Foundation, The Lef Foundation, The Fromm Foundation, The Massachusetts Council for the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, The Mellon Foundation, The Artists Foundation, Meet the Composer, and the Saint Botolph Club Foundation Award. His works are recorded on Spectrum, Centaur, and Neuma.

Shirish Korde is a composer of Indian descent who spent his early years in East Africa. He arrived in the United States in 1965, already well versed in the traditions of Indian and African music. He studied Jazz at Berklee College of Music, composition and analysis with Robert Cogan at New England Conservatory, and Ethnomusicology, especially Asian Music (including Indian drumming with Sharda Sahai), at Brown University. Currently, he is Professor of Music at the College of the Holy Cross.