



South African by birth, Vivek Kiran Parshotam has travelled far and wide as a multitalented percussionist and has had the privilege of accompanying some of the most revered, internationally acclaimed Indian and Western musicians.

Innate talent always finds a way to express itself and Vivek started off by drumming on a kitchen table top when he was just 3 years old. When his father, Kiran Parshotam, first recognised the soulful resonance in his young son's drumming, his vision for Vivek's musical future took root.

A devotional folk singer himself, his father set out to help Vivek develop and master the skill of playing Tabla (a North Indian Classical percussion instrument). He encouraged him to attend almost every prayer meeting where songs of the soul were sung, and he sent his son to learn from local Tabla players who had studied the instrument abroad.

Then, when master Tabla player, Pandit Shridhar Pardeji, came to South Africa he shared his well of knowledge with Vivek. He taught him how to apply his understanding of the instrument with greater versatility so that Vivek's musical prowess continued to grow within his family and the prayer group called Ramjee Bhajan Mandal.

Since then, his musical journey with the Tabla has taken him on gigs across South Africa and in 2006, when he met world-renowned Nasheed singer, Zain Bhikha, his musical career took a more profound direction. Zain Bhikha invited Vivek to travel abroad as his percussionist which afforded him the chance to perform in many countries such as Holland, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Australia, Malaysia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Zimbabwe and the UK. Touring with professional musicians has taken him to the UK most frequently and he has had the honour to perform in many great theatres in the United Kingdom, the highlight of which was when he performed at the Royal Albert Hall in London in 2006 and 2008 respectively.

Further performance opportunities have enabled Vivek to accompany many local and international musicians – such as Muriel Marco, an Argentinian jazz pianist and composer of Argo-African Fusion music. He has also played Tabla with the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra and the University of Pretoria Orchestra, experiences that have elevated his musical profile and earned him the reputation of a highly respected and successful musician in his own country.

Vivek also had the opportunity to attend classes with the late Pandit Shankar Ghosh (a master Tabla player from India) and was later introduced to Drisha Music Academy run by Mrs. Monali Shome (Sangeet Prabhakar in Hindustani Classical Music). She identified his potential for classical music and encouraged him in that direction since her daughter, Maithili Shome, has her own band founded by her father, Mr. Debajit Shome. It's called AAFRIND (African Indian Fusion) which is comprised of a few of South Africa's best musicians. AAFRIND had the distinction of performing in Delhi at The Sacred Festival.

Vivek has since begun playing a variety of percussion instruments and set up a simple studio of his own. With his heart for Indian classical and fusion music, he's been inspired to create a unique instrumental piece using simple percussion sounds with the Handsonic (it imitates all original native instruments). His fascination with this instrument inspired him to create a short instrumental single called "The Beginning" which includes an Australian native instrument called a Didgeridoo, a North Indian Classical stringed instrument called a Santoor and a Bass Kick. He then added Tabla to the piece to create his own, totally unique sound.

Music is his passion and first love! A Jewellery Designer by profession, Vivek takes both sides of life seriously and has found a balance that complements a simple life.

*Vivek Parshotam*