

# REZA KHAN

In an era where emerging instrumental artists often seek success by copying the greats or watering down their own deeper passions to fit in the mainstream, Reza Khan stands out as a true musical citizen of the world, purposefully transcending typical genre trappings with his dynamic fusion of blend of infectious pop, jazz, soul and world music influences. Even after four popular, critically acclaimed indie albums – *Painted Diaries* (2008), *A Simple Plan* (2011), *The Dreamwalker* (2013) and *Wind Dance* (2016) - the Bangladesh born and raised, NYC based composer/guitarist is still artfully straddling the classical Indian and Bengali music of his youth with contemporary funk grooves and the free form energetic sounds of Western rock and jazz fusion.

Khan's latest full length album ***Next Train Home*** reflects the multi-talented performer's ultimate acceptance of an artistry that is all about exploration, not limitation, following a multitude of passions in vibing with contemporary jazz greats rather than dialing down for commercial considerations. While Khan's core acoustic and electric lines are front and center on every tune of ***Next Train Home*** – sometimes alternating on the same track – the album features pianist Matt King, drummers Mauricio Zottarelli and Graham Hawthorne, percussionist Gumbi Ortiz, guitarist Nils, rhythm guitarist Sergio Pereira, bassist Mark Egan, saxophonists Jeff Kashiwa and Andy Snitzer, flutist David Mann and keyboardist Philippe Saisse, who plays synth and adds touches of accordion and marimba.

Khan's unique "day job" as a program manager for the United Nations, contributing to peace operations and multiple conflict operations throughout Africa, Asia and the Middle East, played a direct role in laying the creative foundation for ***Next Train Home***. Traveling in the summer of 2017 to several African countries in six weeks, he was able to hang out and occasionally play with local musicians and learn about their countries' musical cultures. Using his laptop software, he began writing melodies and working on song forms, incorporating samples and loops into scratch recordings. When he came home, he refined these in his home studio in NYC and later invited many of the musicians who appear on the album to live sessions at a larger studio in the city. Jeff Kashiwa and Nils contributed their parts digitally from the West Coast, and there were a few overdubs, but for the most part, ***Next Train Home*** is a single take, live in the studio recording.

"I believe my music has evolved tremendously over the past few years since *Dreamwalker*, and to hear Mark Egan, who played for years with Pat Metheny, tell me that my writing style reminds him of Pat's melodic style, is confirmation that I'm on track to where I have always dreamed of being as a composer and musician," says Khan. "My favorite aspect of ***Next Train Home*** was how organically everything happened, from my original melodies written in African hotels to the natural flow that happened in the studio when we were tracking live, with no overdubs. The album captures and preserves the musicianship and interactions as we lived them in the moment. It reflects some of the greatest musicians in the world having fun, and when you're having fun, everything sounds good."





# ON STAGE

Over the past few years, as Khan has built a loyal East Coast fan base and performed (and sold-out!) NYC hotspots like BB Kings, Iridium, Drom, Zinc Bar and most recently, City Winery. He has attracted the attention of numerous contemporary jazz heavy hitters eager to help him craft his live performances as well as develop his studio recordings. Anxious to hit the road with his new material, Khan is positioning himself to bring an incredible show to venues everywhere.

## NOTABLE LIVE PERFORMANCES

**Blue Note Jazz Festival** – New York, NY (sold out show)  
**BB KINGS** – New York, NY (sold out CD release party - CD Dreamwalker)  
**Iridium Jazz Club** – New York, NY (sold out CD release party - CD Wind Dance)  
**DROM Brazilian Jazz Festival** – New York, NY  
**City Winery** – New York, NY (sold out show on the main stage)  
**Highline Ball Room** – New York, NY (opened for Blondie)  
**NAMM** - Austin, TX (Music Festival)  
**Waldorf Astoria**, New York, NY (Fund Raising Event for ASPCA)  
**Central Park Summer Stage**, New York, NY  
**Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**– Cleveland, OH (w/ Joe Walsh, 38 Special)  
**Venetian Casino** - Las Vegas, NV (Corporate Event)  
**Embarcadero Center** - San Diego, CA (opened for Mel Torme)  
**JW Marriott** – Dubai, UAE (Dubai Jazz Festival)  
**Radisson Blue** – Kuwait City, Kuwait (Corporate Event)  
**United Nations** – New York, NY (Earth Day Celebrations)  
**Zinc Bar** – New York, NY (Sold out shows)

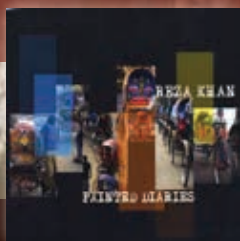




# MUSIC



For Reza, his latest project is a musical statement declaring that he has come a long way as a musician, and the 28 years dedicated to his craft have resulted in his best piece of work ever. In short, this is his time to be recognized on a wider scale. Yet it's more than simply a showcase for his multitude of talents as a virtuoso acoustic and electric guitarist and visionary contemporary jazz composer. Throughout the tracks on **Next Train Home**, Reza proves himself a master as a band leader, vibing with some of contemporary jazz's most storied musicians. While Matt King's piano harmonies and solos are stellar throughout, and smooth jazz fans will no doubt love the sax features by Jeff Kashiwa and Andy Snitzer, the deeper sonic architecture and rhythmic foundation around Khan are created by the explosive one-two punch of keyboard master Philippe Saisse and world class percussionist Gumbi Ortiz. Saisse's arsenal includes marimba, accordion, spacey synth harmonies, funky walls of sound and symphonic grandeur. Ortiz complements his deeply exotic textures with occasional rousing shout outs in Spanish.



One of the most emotionally revealing songs is "Drop of Faith," a bright free flowing slice of tropical-tinged dream funk that begins as a balmy ballad and then grooves up for Khan's breezy, up-tempo acoustic guitar melody. Perhaps the most "smooth jazz" flavored of any tune on the album, the track was produced by veteran hit maker Nils, who also contributes his sizzling electric guitar with a high energy guitar solo. Saisse contributes hypnotic synth harmonies and atmosphere, while Ortiz keeps the grooves hopping with his intense percussion – including a solo percussion outro. Another key track propelling Khan into a promising future is "The Way," which begins as a soulful contemplation blending Khan's graceful acoustic and Egan's sensuous bass before shifting gears into a mid-tempo light funk tune with Khan's snappy acoustic, then electric melody bursting over Ortiz's simmering percussion sizzle. The track also includes Ortiz's Spanish vocals, a wistful Saisse accordion solo, and touches of hypnotic marimba. "Plutonik" is an easy grooving old school jazz fusion tune featuring Khan's

silky acoustic and crisp electric rolling energetically over soulful atmospheres and shimmering Fender Rhodes harmonies. It begins with Ortiz's playful shouts and includes a whimsical spacey synth solo, dreamy atmospheres and increasingly dense percussion textures. Inspired by the multitude of voices from so many different cultures that Khan has had the privilege of hearing throughout his life and UN career, "The Gathering" features his jazzy guitar strolling along in smooth interaction with a silky sax line until Saisse pops in with a brash synth crash sound and the tune revs up the funk and offers King space for one of his trademark piano solo jams. Launching with Saisse's tropical tinged marimba and Ortiz's sensual shakers, the closing title track "Next Train Home" starts with an all dreamy atmosphere and subtle locomotive percussion, with melodic-harmonic interaction by Khan and Egan that will remind people of the classic Pat Metheny vibe. It evolves into a high energy funk jam featuring swirling vibes, deep exotic percussion and dramatic symphonic textures.

Another essential listen on **Next Train Home** is "It's About Time," which opens with Jeff Kashiwa's soulful sax and includes a later, highly charged solo. Khan's snappy guitar vibes nicely with Saisse's marimba harmonies, and the funky fun includes one of King's trademark high energy piano solos. The expansive six minute track includes our first taste of Ortiz's intense percussion, snazzy guitar/marimba duality between Khan and Saisse, and a sax/percussion jam section.



# FROM THE BEGINNING

Born into a musical family in what is now Bangladesh, Khan and his brothers received a firm grounding in Indian classical music from their father, an instrumentalist, composer and poet. While he was trained in Indian percussion from the time he was eight or nine, Khan's musical world changed forever when his brother brought home a bootleg copy of Frampton Comes Alive. Khan's introduction to American pop/rock – including Eagles, Grand Funk and America – led him to put aside his training on tabla, sitar and sarod and embrace the guitar as his primary instrument. Later influences include Pat Metheny (who "made me want to make myself better and better musically"), The Rippingtons, Acoustic Alchemy and the musical genres of Brazil (bossa nova, samba, tropicalia). Khan formed his first band, Yours Sincerely, in the Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka. The group's lone album, Members Only, sold an incredible half a million copies, but Khan soon set his musical pursuits aside to develop his burgeoning career in international relations.

A graduate of Queens College with a degree in computer science, Khan's calling as a humanitarian has led him everywhere from Asia (where his introduction to poverty and human rights abuses inspired him to work for the UN) to Angola, where he was a member of a peacekeeping force in that war torn country. In the late 90's, he lived in South Africa, where he performed and composed music and also married and started a family.

## REVIEWS

"Reza Khan's demanding work at the UN has helped his development as an artist of vision, courage and conviction in many ways. It's allowed him to continue to see and play music all over the world, interact with people and musicians of different cultures who have inspired his own artistry. It also prevents him from touring regularly in support of his brilliant projects, which means he, unlike most artists who write and record contemporary jazz, doesn't feel the pressure to score hit singles to bring out large audiences. With such a global and creative perspective, he can concentrate on following his muse towards creating fascinating – and yes, ultra-infectious and melodic and still quite often, radio friendly – music that draws from his home culture, the jazz of his adopted home America, and so many percussive native cultures in between. His multi-faceted, rhythmically eclectic music makes him a magnet for contemporary jazz stars, who love the challenge of adding their input to his tracks. With his latest and most ambitious album to date, he's ready to join the ranks of all the greats he has played with for years and reach new levels of acceptance and success. – **Jonathan Widran**

"Reza's project is beautiful. He is one of the most melodic and musical composers in contemporary jazz today. His compositions have a perfect balance of melodic, harmonic and rhythmical themes that are fresh, sophisticated and always enjoyable to the listener – and player! A much welcomed breath of fresh air maintaining the jazz in contemporary jazz. I loved playing on this project because it's a return to the roots of contemporary jazz where most of us over 50 were so enamored. Reminiscent of artists like early 70's Pat Metheny, Bob James, etc." – **Saxophonist, Jeff Kashiwa**

"I am so excited to be a part of this project...my third with him. This time, it's a much more adventurous project, beyond the confine of "smooth bass" radio and progressive. I am particularly excited about being reunited with my dear friend, the legendary Mark Egan, who contributed to my first ever solo project, Valerian, and my go-to bassist during my days as an arranger/producer in NYC. His playing alongside the drummer Mauricio gives that awesome fusion feel and reminds me of my days in Boston with Gary Burton, Pat Metheny, Bill Frisell and others...Those new tracks and Reza's compositions SCREAMED of Gumbi Ortiz to add the icing on the cake. I introduced him to Reza and the result is amazing! I think Reza reached a new level as a composer on this new one." – **Keyboardist, Philippe Saisse**

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