



More about Arman Ameri and Ank Schravendeel

ARMAN AMIRI

I am an Indo-Persian musician and multi-instrumentalist, specializing in composing music that blends Sufi culture with Indian elements. I play the Sarinda, Rabab, Setar, Tambur, and Harmonium, and I am a Dhrupad singer, a form of Indian classical music. My project focuses on meditative singing and attentive listening, where I serve as both a performer and instructor. Using Ragas (Indian melodic frameworks) as a practice framework, I guide the audience through a musical and meditative experience that promotes mindfulness and well-being.

In 2015, I began designing special sessions that use music to promote meditation, mindfulness, and relaxation. This idea emerged as my future career path, but I faced difficulties in Iran. Driven by a desire to learn more about music's impact on mental health and mindfulness, I traveled to India and lived there to practice Dhrupad music.

Dhrupad music is based on Nada Yoga, a form of yoga that focuses on the relationship between sound vibrations and the body. This music is deeply rooted in the Ragas and embodies both artistic and spiritual dimensions. In 2022, I moved to the Netherlands to further research and design Meditative Raga Singing and Attentive Listening sessions. Over the past two years, I have developed this practice into my professional focus, presenting it in various formats to diverse audiences.

In my practice, I employ the ancient techniques of Nada Yoga and chanting, alongside the Dhrupad method, using Ragas as tools for singing and meditation. My performances go beyond entertainment, fostering attentive listening and an inner connection.

I am very happy that I have this opportunity to present my work in the Netherlands for people who want to live a healthier, more fulfilling life and find deep connection in their inner world.

ANK SCHRAVENDEEL

I started singing as a four year old, in church, later in church choir, at school in services and performances. At age 25 I started to do vipassana meditation. I came across chanting. The chanting was not appealing to me, the monotonous melody and unknown Pali words didn't resonate with me. So my singing and meditation were two different worlds of experience.

In 2018, in a course of Gregory Kremer, he made the connection between singing and meditation. He suggested creative expressions as a way of right intention, a part of the Eightfold path. My world of singing and of meditation came together. The making of singing a suitable method for meditation was a pathway of discovery. “Freeing the voice” (stembevrijding) with Jan Kortie, composing melodies to the verses of the Dhammapada by Cees Leurs, improvisational singing and Buddhist mantra’s with Cees on the piano. Heading now for classical Indian music, to make use of the experience of the connection of music and spirituality, with Arman Amiri.

How does this relate to Vipassana? In the Sati Patthana Sutta it is said, to consider your mindfulness internally (being mindful of your body, feeling-tone, thoughts, emotions) consider externally (recognize those experiences in someone else) and both internally and externally (speaking and acting with someone else). In the singing meditation you start with hearing your own voice, feeling the vibrations, finding the intention to make sound and not knowing what will be expressed. It continues with hearing others, feeling togetherness in “sounding”. The sounds that harmonise with each other unconsciously. Bringing into harmony brings joy, joy brings openness, openness leads to concentration. Concentration supports mindfulness.

