The Raga Ensemble delights with exotic melodies

JOURNEYS IN MUSIC: NEW WORLDS, OLD WORLDS
The Raga Ensemble
By Craig K. Chang

For the new listener, Hindustani classical music is very unapproachable. One would imagine that the strange instruments and exotic melodies simply do not appeal to the modern listener, or that the monotony and extreme duration of the pieces would scare away all but the most dedicated musicologists. But the hypnotic perfor- mance the Raga Ensemble gave on Friday in the First Congregational Church on an intimate stage, into even the most unfamiliar musical territory, has a universality strong enough to pull listeners through the Raga Ensemble's Raga Ensembles with a blending of his voice with the purring of the tamboura and tabla (percussion), vocalists Warren Senders and Vijaya Sundaram provided the heart of the material. And Leake's insistent rhythm not only provided a sort of backbone to the music but also ed a sort of backbone to the music but also emphasized the emotional swinging of the “khyal,” a vocal art form that is poetry itself. During numerous passages, we could hear numerous interpolations of the lyrics provided the per- formation, musicians would entertain neighbors. And yet beyond all this coziness, the musicians brought the audience to another world. Only here did we completely realize the sound into shapes, colors, and the es- tinct of nuance or obvious gestures of humor. During this concert served to establish the Hindu roots of Senders' widely acclaimed AntiGravity day, don't miss them at Killian Auditorium on October 30, 1993. Admission is free.}

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