Indian Percussionist -Shri Swapnil Sapre

Artist and Founder

Damruki – School of Rhythm and Seven Swaras,

https://rythmseven.org/

(Muse with Music and Art)





Early Life:

Swapnil's Musical Journey: A Legacy of Rhythm and Tradition

Swapnil's musical journey began in the culturally rich city of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. From the tender age of six, he exhibited a deep passion for rhythm and percussion, leading him to pursue the art of Tabla under the tutelage of **Shri Sanjay Mishra**. This early training laid the foundation for his lifelong dedication to Hindustani classical music.

Growing up in a musically inclined family, Swapnil was deeply influenced by his mother, a talented violinist, who played a pivotal role in nurturing his musical aspirations. His sister, a professional Hindustani vocalist, further enriched the artistic atmosphere at home. His father, though not formally trained, possessed an exceptional understanding of **ragas**, demonstrating an innate musical sensibility. Additionally, many of Swapnil's extended family members are accomplished Hindustani classical musicians, making music an integral part of his upbringing.

To formalize his training, Swapnil pursued a **10-year comprehensive course in Tabla** from **Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh**—one of India's most prestigious music universities. With a strong classical foundation, he sought to refine his skills further and moved to Pune to undergo an **intensive 5-year advanced training** under the guidance of

the esteemed **Shri Suresh Samant Ji**. This period was instrumental in shaping his nuanced understanding of Tabla, as he delved deeper into the intricacies of rhythm, improvisation, and compositional mastery.

With years of rigorous training and a deep-rooted familial connection to Hindustani classical music, Swapnil continues his artistic pursuit, seamlessly blending tradition with contemporary expression, carrying forward a legacy of rhythm and melody.

Musical Life:

Swapnil's Musical Evolution: A Journey of Lifelong Learning and Artistic Expansion

For the past **15 years**, Swapnil has continued his advanced Tabla studies under the guidance of **Dr. Aneesh Pradhan Ji** from Mumbai, learning alongside his **Guru Bhai, Shri Dhaivat Mehta Ji**. This ongoing mentorship has further refined his technique, deepened his understanding of rhythm, and allowed him to explore the finer nuances of Hindustani classical percussion at an advanced level.

Music is a way of life for Swapnil's family. His **son is a budding Carnatic Flute and Hindustani Bansuri player**, while his **daughter is training in classical dance forms**, continuing the family's rich artistic tradition.

Embracing Carnatic Music and South Indian Rhythmic Traditions

While Swapnil's early training was primarily in Hindustani classical music, his exposure to **Carnatic music** was initially limited. However, his frequent travels to **Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Thrissur, and Chennai** broadened his perspective and sparked a deep interest in South Indian rhythmic traditions. Recognizing the immense depth of this musical form, he decided to make Bengaluru his home, where he has resided for the past **18 years**.

Eager to immerse himself in the Carnatic percussion tradition, Swapnil trained in **Mridangam** under the guidance of **Vidwaan Late Dr. Nandyala Ramamurthy**

Garu, a revered maestro from the **Nadabrahma Thyagaraja Ashram Centre for Music and Performing Arts, Bangalore**. This cross-genre training significantly expanded his musical vocabulary, allowing him to bridge the rhythmic elements of both Hindustani and Carnatic traditions, creating a unique and versatile percussive approach.

A Multifaceted Performer and Mentor

With an extensive performance career, Swapnil has collaborated with a diverse range of artists across **instrumental and vocal music**, as well as dance forms such as **Kathak, Bharatanatyam, and Contemporary dance**. His ability to seamlessly adapt to various artistic expressions has made him a sought-after accompanist in both traditional and experimental musical ensembles.

Beyond performance, Swapnil is deeply committed to **teaching and mentoring students** who seek to understand the **rich musical traditions of India and beyond**. His teaching philosophy integrates:

- The **language of music** and the **science and art of percussion**, fostering a deep-rooted rhythmic understanding.
- Exploring **folk, devotional, and classical vocal traditions**, including **Ghazals, Bhajans, Kirtans, Qawwalis, Dhrupad, Prabandh Gayaki, and Khayals**.
- Encouraging students to **express emotions through movement**, integrating dance with rhythm.
- Guiding learners in playing **one or more percussion instruments** suited to their preferred style, repertoire, and personal artistic expression.

Through his continuous pursuit of learning, performance, and education, Swapnil remains dedicated to **preserving tradition while embracing innovation**, inspiring the next generation of musicians to explore the boundless possibilities of rhythm and melody.

Teaching and Performing:

A Holistic Approach to Music Education and Artistic Development

As a dedicated mentor and educator, Swapnil takes **personal responsibility** for curating **customized learning programs** tailored to each student's **unique abilities, interests, and aspirations**. His structured approach ensures that every student receives **individualized guidance**, enabling them to perform at their best and develop a profound connection with music.

Comprehensive Training and Artistic Nurturing

Swapnil's role extends beyond traditional instruction; he meticulously plans and executes:

- **Customized Learning Paths**: Designing training programs that cater to a student's strengths, skill level, and artistic goals.
- **Taalim and Rehearsal Regimens**: Establishing a disciplined practice schedule to enhance technical proficiency and musical expression.
- **Workshops and Performance Tours**: Organizing specialized workshops, interactive sessions, and concert tours to provide students with real-world exposure and performance experience.
- **Event Promotion and Community Engagement**: Actively promoting music through concerts, festivals, and cultural events, fostering appreciation for traditional and contemporary art forms.

Music as a Catalyst for Transformation and Healing

Beyond performance and pedagogy, Swapnil holds a **deep conviction in the transformative power of music**. He believes that music serves as a **catalyst for personal growth, emotional expression, and inner healing**. Drawing from both **traditional wisdom and modern research-based therapeutic studies**, he integrates:

- **Music Therapy Principles**: Utilizing rhythmic cycles, melodic structures, and improvisational techniques for relaxation and emotional well-being.
- **Holistic Artistic Development**: Encouraging students to experience music not just as an art form, but as a means of **spiritual and emotional enrichment**.
- **Cultural and Psychological Impact**: Exploring the profound effects of music on mental clarity, mindfulness, and personal transformation.

With this holistic approach, Swapnil continues to **inspire, educate, and empower** students, ensuring that their journey in music becomes a lifelong source of joy, discipline, and personal evolution.





Beyond Percussion:

Swapnil: A Visionary Percussionist, Educator, and Poet

While excelling as a **professional percussionist**, Swapnil also leads **Damruki** (formerly known as **Rhythm Seven**), a vibrant musical initiative where he teaches **Indian classical music (Hindustani and Carnatic)** and **percussion** to students from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. Through his teachings, he nurtures a deep understanding of **rhythmic structures, improvisation, and the spiritual essence of music**.

Beyond performance and education, Swapnil is also a prolific **writer and scholar** of Indian music. His works extensively explore **Tabla, Mridangam, and the intricate rhythmic frameworks of Indian classical music**, making complex musical concepts accessible to both enthusiasts and serious practitioners.

A Literary Maestro: Poetry and Musical Philosophy

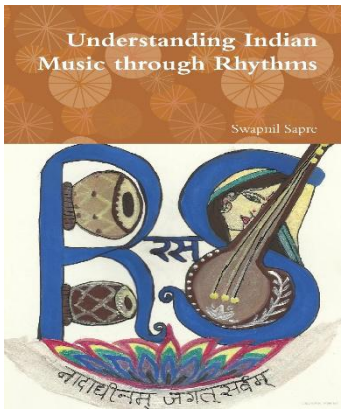
An accomplished Hindi poet, Swapnil writes under the pen name **"Noor" / "Sopaan Noor"** and has been recognized as a **"Literary Colonel."** He passionately promotes Hindi literature by organizing **Kavi Sammelans (poetry gatherings)** and **Poetry ensembles**, creating platforms for poetic expression and artistic discourse. His published poetry collections, **“Noorana”** and **“Chuski,”** reflect his profound artistic sensibilities and ability to capture emotions through words.

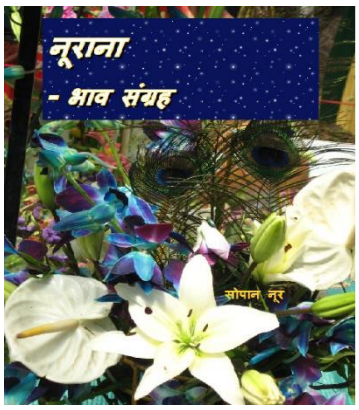
Authorship and Musical Scholarship

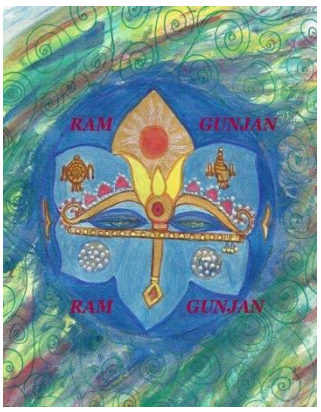
Swapnil's dedication to music education extends to his authorship of the renowned course book, **"Understanding Indian Music through Rhythms."** This book has garnered widespread appreciation among both beginners and seasoned musicians who seek to explore the **intersection of art and science in music.** The book serves as a **structured guide to mastering a musical instrument**, offering insights into:

- The **path to musical mastery**, from fundamental techniques to advanced improvisation.
- The **journey from sound to non-sound**, exploring the philosophical and meditative dimensions of music.
- The concept of **Nada Yoga**—the ancient practice of experiencing music as a spiritual discipline, leading to a state of divine bliss and transcendence.

Through his multifaceted contributions as a **musician, educator, poet, and scholar**, Swapnil continues to inspire and guide aspiring artists in their pursuit of musical excellence and creative expression.







A Journey Through Rhythm, Devotion, and World Music

Swapnil believes that **percussion instruments serve as a profound medium** for spiritual exploration—a vessel that guides both the performer and the listener on a transformative journey from mere existence to **musical ecstasy and divine bliss**. In this shared experience, both the participant and the host travel together, transcending the physical realm and immersing themselves in the deep meditative state of **Nada Yoga**—the union of sound and consciousness.

At **Rhythm Seven (now Damruki)**, Swapnil and his team are dedicated to ensuring that every student **discovers a higher version of themselves** by fully surrendering to the power of **rhythm and sound**. The structured training,

combined with immersive musical experiences, allows students to **develop technical expertise, emotional depth, and spiritual insight** in their musical pursuits.

A Musical Visionary: Devotional Composition and Singing

Beyond being a **percussionist and educator**, Swapnil is also a **singer and poet**. This unique combination of **melody, rhythm, and lyrical depth** has fueled his creative journey as a **composer**. His passion for devotional music led him to compose and record **11 soulful Bhajans dedicated to Lord Shri Rama**, released under the title **"Raam Gunjan."** This collection embodies his deep reverence for divine music and his ability to channel devotion through **melody, rhythm, and poetry**.

A Global Music Explorer and Seeker of Rustic Wisdom

An **avid traveler**, Swapnil has journeyed across the globe, absorbing the **essence of world music** and seeking inspiration from diverse cultural traditions. His explorations have played a vital role in shaping his **unique artistic identity**, as he integrates global rhythmic influences into his Indian classical roots, creating a musical style that is truly **one of its kind**.

While he has experienced the vibrancy of international music scenes, Swapnil finds his **deepest inspiration in solitude and nature**. He cherishes **solo trips** to:

- **Quiet mountains** that echo with the whispers of ancient wisdom.
- **Smoky villages** where folklore and rhythm live in the heart of the people.
- **Riverbeds and seashores** that sing the eternal lullaby of time.
- **Ancient temple sites** where the vibrations of centuries-old chants resonate in the soul.

These journeys are not just physical explorations but **spiritual immersions**, helping him reconnect with his inner self, refine his artistry, and **keep his music and life soulful, fresh, and divine**.

Through his **unwavering commitment to rhythm, devotion, and exploration**, Swapnil continues to **inspire, create, and transform**—ensuring that music remains not just an art form, but a **sacred experience of self-discovery and transcendence**.