

# **SNJO looks east for spicy Queen's Hall adventures**

**The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra is broadening its horizons with a concert entitled 21 Spices featuring the sensational Indian percussionist, Trilok Gurtu, at the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh on Sunday 30 March.**

The son of vocalist Shobha Gurtu, a legendary figure in Indian classical music known as the Thumri Queen, Trilok Gurtu has won an international reputation for his work with guitarists John McLaughlin and Pat Metheny, saxophonist Jan Garbarek and keyboardist and Weather Report founder, Joe Zawinul. He has also appeared with world music stars including Salif Keita, Oumou Sangare, Angelique Kidjo, Omara Portuondo, and Tuvan throat singers, Huun Huur Tu and has recorded and toured with Italian virtuosi, the Arke String Quartet.

A formally trained percussionist, Gurtu has developed a highly expressive, completely individual playing style, incorporating tabla, a customised drum kit, an array of shakers and gongs, and a bucket of water with which he creates myriad tones and timbres.

For SNJO founder-artistic director, saxophonist Tommy Smith, working with Gurtu offers an opportunity to return an invitation that saw Smith touring America and Europe with Gurtu in the 1990s.

“Following the release of Trilok’s Bad Habits Die Hard album, from which 21 Spices takes its name, he asked me to join his band on tour,” says Smith. “It was an unforgettable experience. Trilok is a genuinely unique musician and his music is exciting and brilliantly imaginative. This will take the SNJO and our audience into a sound world that’s very different to the one generally occupied by orchestral jazz. It’s a very exciting prospect.”

Gurtu’s compositions have been arranged for the SNJO by the German percussionist, pianist, composer and conductor, Wolf Kerschek, who has worked in situations from jazz big bands and philharmonic orchestras to conducting football’s World Cup anthem and participating in Sesame Street.

“Kerschek is an amazingly versatile musician and arranger and we’re really looking forward to bringing his orchestrations of Trilok’s music to the stage,” says Smith. “Knowing his work and having played with Trilok, I’m sure these concerts will be exhilarating events.”

