

Akshay is a reputed Indian-American percussionist known for his sensitivity, tonality and energetic style of playing. As a child, Akshay began learning the mridangam from Sri. T.S. Nandakumar in Mumbai. Ironically, his true passion for Carnatic music sparked only after his family moved to the United States and he began learning from Dr. Venkat Natarajan and Guru T.H. Subash Chandran in New Jersey. After completing his masters in engineering in The Cooper Union, in New York City, Akshay moved to Chennai, India to pursue music full-time. He has accompanied and toured with the leading artists in the Carnatic music field throughout North America, Europe and Asia. He is a graded artist of All India Radio. He has also given solo as well as collaborative performances with Hindustani, Latin jazz, American jazz and rock musicians in unique showcases of South Indian percussion. His latest solo works have been exploring Indian rhythms in an avant-garde approach, bringing together digital loopers and visual graphics. 'Re-imagining Indian Rhythms' aims to explore the boundaries of the Indian rhythms and its possibilities. Akshay is also a core member of the Indian Classical fusion band 'The Thayir Sadam Project.'

Akshay has also published several academic papers on the mridangam and Indian rhythms in international music technology journals. He continues to work on research collaborations on generative approaches for Carnatic rhythms with NYU Abu Dhabi. Akshay is the recipient of many awards including the 'Best Mridangist' award from the Music Academy Madras, Maharajapuram Youth Excellence Award, C.S. Murugaboopathy award from Krishna Gana Sabha, 2015 North America Young Musician Award and many others. He is also an educator of Carnatic percussion, teaching both classical and multi-genre musicians.

**Website:** [www.AkshayLaya.com](http://www.AkshayLaya.com)

**Youtube:** [www.YouTube.com/AkshayLaya](http://www.YouTube.com/AkshayLaya)