



“I knew him before he became Arijit Singh. He is an educated musician, he understands his Sargam, and he has got depth.”
-Shankar Mahadevan

I received an email in mid May from Jonas Productions requesting tuning services for two pianos being used in an Arijit Singh performance in Trenton, NJ on May 28th. It peaked my interest as I had started listening to Shankar Mahadevan and Ravi Shankar back when I was in high school. Let me tell you a little bit about Arijit Singh before going into my behind the scenes tuning experience.

Arijit was born in West Bengal, India in 1987. Fame Gurukul, an Indian reality show, was the first major performance of his career in 2005, but he was not widely recognized until 2013 with the release of two major hits, *Tum Hi Ho* and *Chahun Main Ya Naa*. After this breakthrough, he continued to rise in fame

becoming cited as one of the best singers in the Indian music industry. He has received a National Award and six Filmfare Awards.

Arijit’s songs are mostly in Hindi and Bengali, but he has been known to use other Indian languages on occasion. Known as the *King of Playback Singing*, Arijit is often compared to Atif Aslam for similar tone and texture. Atif said about Arijit, “If God’s kind to someone you should also respect them. Arijit has been blessed and people should respect him.”



When the president of Jonas Productions contacted me about this gig, I was excited and grateful to be part of a big commercial performance. I had never heard of Arijit Singh before and after some research, I was even more honored to be chosen for the job. Unfortunately, I did not get a chance to meet him as he did not come out during sound check, but it did not diminish the job any.

I arrived at the Cure Arena to find a large crew of at least 50 people building the stage and getting set up for the performance. Arijit must be a Yamaha guy as both his pianos were Japanese made Yamahas (U1 and a C7). After fending off a few of the stage crew making the same piano tuner jokes I have heard a million times, I got to work getting the pianos in shape. It was a challenge tuning during stage building considering the noise, but I managed and was satisfied with the results. No complaints from the band was additional assurance. At this point, I left and was to return for sound check.

I was scheduled to do a second quick tuning after sound check to make sure the pianos were in the best shape they could be for the performance. I waited and listened until it was my chance to go back up on stage for final tuning adjustments. It is good to have a technician around for sound check in the case that a piano repair is required. Imagine something needing repair right before the concert and the piano tech is a 30 minute drive away. NOT GOOD! Luckily for everyone, no such event happened and the pianos were in good shape for the show.

I did not see Arijit perform, but I had a great time being part of the experience anyway. I hope that if you went to the concert, it was spectacular and you had a wonderful evening!

**“Arijit has the ability and openness needed to make every recording a genuine collaboration.”
-Vishal Dadlani**