Among hereditary musicians of North India, musical training begins early in life and encompasses many years of sina-ba-sina or “heart-to-heart” instruction; a musical lineage thus constitutes a chain of hearts linked through a continuous stream of musical technique and repertoire, but also through the affective structure of collective memory passed from father to son. Inspired by anthropologist Andrew Shryock's concept of the “genealogical imagination” (1997), this paper explores conflicting visions of the musical past, and searches for new ways to negotiate between history and memory that respect the embodied connections to the past lived by hereditary musicians in India today.