



Sruti Notes

A Publication of SRUTI - The India Music & Dance Society

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President's Note

Greetings! I hope you are all enjoying the mild winter and have had a great start to the new year in 2012!

At the outset I take the opportunity to congratulate the 2011 Sruti Board of Directors under the strong stewardship of Uma Prabhakar for the outstanding execution of a Silver Jubilee year of activities. This was truly a banner year and most aptly crowned the efforts of the volunteers of the past 25 years in a beautiful way by showcasing Sruti on the crown lights of the Peco building in downtown Philadelphia in November. Through the efforts of each and every member of all the past Boards, Sruti has grown from small beginnings to an organization that is highly valued by performing artistes, the local community as well as mainstream organizations that seek us for collaborations.

I consider it a privilege and honor to work with the enthusiastic and competent members of the Sruti 2012 board as we take the organization into many more milestone years. My fellow board members include Ravi Pillutla as President-Elect, Venkat Kilambi as Treasurer, Bhuvana Srinivasan as Secretary, Ramana Kanumalla as Director of Resources, Lakshmi Radhakrishnan as Director of Publications and Outreach, Nari Narayanan as Director of Marketing and Uma Sivakumar and Sundar Arunapuram as Directors.

As is tradition, the 2012 season will begin with Thyagaraja Aradhana on March 17th at the Hindu Temple of Delaware. In the interest of maintaining our high standards of presentation, I request members of groups who sing the Utsava Sampradaya kritis and Pancharatna kritis to attend the group rehearsals that are underway. Please contact [srutipihila@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphila@gmail.com) if you need more information about rehearsals. The main concert of the day will feature Ashvin Bhogendra accompanied by L. Ramakrishnan on the violin and Akshay Anantapadmanabhan on the mirdangam.

We have an excellent lineup of programs that includes highly classical solos, unexpected collaborations as well as dances by renowned performers. The Spring season opens with a violin concert by Shri. R.K.Shriramkumar. The dance performances this year feature two renowned Bharatanatyam performers. Priyadarsini Govind will perform for Sruti at the lovely Bryn Mawr College's Goodhart Hall in the Spring. In the Fall, Sruti will co-present with the Annenberg center a dance performance themed "New Dimensions to a Traditional Repertoire" by Rama Vaidyanathan. One of the foremost Bharatanatyam performers today, this will be Rama's first performance in the Philadelphia area and will include a master's class by the artiste.

Vocal concerts this year include performances by the sisters Ranjani and Gayathri in the Spring as well as a thematic Jugalbandi "Exploring the influences of folk music on Carnatic music" by S.Sowmya and Carnatic music idol Bharat Sundar in the Fall. The latter concert is being presented as part of the Lively Arts Series at Montgomery County Community College. This is the first time an Indian classical music concert is featured in the Lively Arts Series. Sruti pays tribute to doyenne T. Brinda in late summer with a concert by B.Balasubrahmanian. Some of you may remember his soulful concert at Sruti's Thyagaraja Aradhana some years ago at St. Mary's hall, Villanova. We are also delighted to share that we have confirmed presenting Sanjay Subrahmanyam on a limited concert tour in the Fall.

Along the genre of interesting collaborations Sruti presents "Strings Attached" featuring the husband and wife team of Veenai Jayanthi with Kumaresh on the violin. This will be co-presented with the Drexel Indian Graduate student's organization. Spirit, a classico-folk concert by Flautist Shashank and Manganiars, the folk musicians of the deserts of Rajasthan who are known for the classical vocabulary of their songs, will be presented at The Painted Bride.

This year will also focus on music appreciation sessions intended to educate the general public and the growing number of Indian music students. The first of these will be a presentation by R.K.Shriramkumar titled

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"Musical and Lyrical beauty in the compositions of Muthuswami Dikshitar". Later in Spring watch for Anantha R. Krishnan's tribute to Palghat Mani Iyer on this his centenary year when Anantha will talk about the music of Shri Mani Iyer and what it means to him. In the summer as part of a tribute to T. Brinda we will present a session by Kiranavali Vidyasankar on the doyen's music and life. Contingent on grants, Sruti plans to present multiple master classes by artistes at local universities in the Fall of 2012. We hope that these efforts will enhance our outreach and increase participation and attendance at our programs.

While still in office last year Ramaa Nathan along with her Resources Committee proactively applied for grants for some of the Spring concerts. She has since officially handed over the mantle of the Resources Committee to the experienced and able hands of Ramana Kanumalla. Since then the Resource Committee headed by Ramana Kanumalla has applied for prestigious grants for the upcoming year and started to seek corporate funding. Lakshmi Radhakrishnan has hit the road running with the Publications and Outreach committee with enhancements to the website, planning for Sruti Notes and the Aradhana book. Watch for some state of the art marketing material from Nari Narayanan and his committee as we launch the year's program. The Marketing committee has put together the media kit to solicit advertisements. Under the mentorship of Uma Sivakumar, the Sruti Youth Group has begun their planning of activities and we welcome more of the youth to share of their talent and time by joining. We are happy to have Venkat Kilambi back in the fold to maintain our finances to be in top shape. Bhuvana Srinivasan, Ravi Pillutla, Sundar Arunapuram and Uma Sivakumar have started to work on the multitude of visible and invisible tasks that go to making each event a reality. In his role as President Elect, Ravi will begin to look at strategic activities for the organization for the year 2013.

The vibrant cultural environment that Sruti creates in the Philadelphia area can only be sustained by the continued attendance by the members at the concerts and performances. The heart of the organization is its membership – the volunteers who give of their time, talent and money. Please try to attend all the concerts and share the good news of Sruti events with your friends. We urge you to check out the subscription packages that are detailed on our website and become a sponsor for the 2012 season.

We look forward to seeing you all at the Thyagaraja Aradhana on March 17.

Raji Venkatesan
President
On behalf of the SRUTI Board of Directors

From the Publications and Outreach Committee

Dear Sruti Supporters,

The Publications and Outreach committee is pleased to present the first issue of Sruti Notes for 2012 introducing the 2012 board and the subcommittees and the upcoming slate of exciting performances. We present articles written by youngsters in our area, reviews of past concerts, and news and awards from the music and dance world. Our sincere thanks to all our authors.

In addition to this issue and two subsequent issues of Sruti Notes, the committee is also planning to publish a souvenir on the occasion of Thyagaraja Aradhana and the annual Sruti Ranjani towards the end of the year.

We are always looking for articles and information relevant to classical music and dance for publication and look forward to interesting submissions from our members. Please consider writing and submitting articles sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm of music and dance, and encourage children to do so as well. We also welcome members to send us information about awards, first musical performances (arangetrams / rangapravesams) and other achievements that you would like to share with the SRUTI members.

SRUTI welcomes suggestions to improve the publications, outreach and website content to make them more relevant and engaging to you. Please feel free to send email with your comments and suggestions to srutiphila@gmail.com.

Thank you and wish you an exciting SRUTI music and dance season ahead.

Lakshmi Radhakrishnan
On behalf of the Publications and Outreach Committee

From the Resource and Development Committee

The Resources and Development Committee is pleased to welcome Uma Prabhakar, Viji Swaminathan and Sunanda Gandham to serve during the 2012 and 2013 terms.

The team kicked off the year with a huge effort in preparing the grant application for the Philadelphia Music Project (PMP) award. The award decision will be announced during the first week of April. PMP is an initiative of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage and funded by the renowned Pew Charitable Trusts and administered by The University of the Arts. The grant application covers two events, during the Fall season, involving 13 artists, and 8 community engagement events (workshops/lectures) in collaboration with local academic institutions - University of Pennsylvania, Swarthmore College, Temple University and Montgomery County Community College. The community engagement events proposed will involve the visiting artists and nine experts from the world of music and academia.

The opinions expressed by the contributors of articles and reviews are published in a spirit of openness of communication and freedom of expression. They do not necessarily reflect the views of Sruti's Board or its members.

The committee will continue to identify new funding sources, establish and develop relationships with various funding agencies and submit proposals.

Ramana Kanumalla
Director of Resources & Development

Being in the USA Carnatic Idol
By Kethan Srinivasan

"Nachikethan," called out one of the judges. I slowly pulled myself step by step to the stage. At first I was shy as I never have been on a television program before. "Nachikethan," said Sowmya one of the judges. I nervously laughed. "Don't be shy," said my inner voice. "Who gave you your name?" asked the judge. "My dad named me", I replied, still shy. "Okay. Can you sing Sahana?" asked Sowmya. "Yes," I said and sang *Emanadicchevo in the raga Sahana set to Roopaka tala*.

"Wait, how about Dhanyasi?" said Shashikiran, another judge. "Okay," I said again. From there I sang *Sangeeta gnanamu in the raga Dhanyasi in Adi tala. Before I sang it, the third judge, Neyveli Santanagopalan, asked me to sing the whole Pallavi. "Can you sing kalpanaswaram?" asked Sowmya. I politely said, "No". "No? Can you at least try?" she asked again. "I haven't learnt it but I will do it next year," I said again in a polite tone. "Okay, thank you!" she said. I unplugged my sruti box and walked off the stage.*

"The star kid of Carnatic music idol New York-New Jersey is" said Shashikiran. "Nachikethan!" My heart pounded with excitement as I walked to the judges and Neyveli Santhangopalan pinned the star to my kurta.

When it all ended, I jumped out the doors of Montgomery High School. "Woo-hoo!" I shouted. "I'm a star kid!"

I would like to thank my guru, Smt. Kiranavali Vidyasankar for teaching me music and driving me all the way to New Jersey for the competition.

Kethan is a 3rd grader at KD Markley Elementary school in Great Valley School District. He lives in Malvern, Pennsylvania with his parents and his sister. He has been learning Carnatic music from Smt.Kiranavali Vidyasankar for the past 2 years. He also learns the western violin.

My Carnatic Music Idol Experience
by Sashank Sridhar (5th grader in Reading, PA)

I still remember the day when I found the flyer for the Carnatic Music Idol competition flyer in between the front passenger seat and the tray. "Oh no," I thought, not another one of these competitions. When I saw that it will be broadcasted on Jaya TV and the fact that vidhwans like Sri Shashikiran, Smt.Sowmya, and Sri Neyveli Santhanagopalan were going to be the judges, it was clear in my mind. I

definitely could not do this. Later that evening I told my mom about it, and she had been waiting to tell me about it. She, using her magical persuading powers convinced me into doing it. In her words of wisdom, she told me to think of it just as an experience. "It was an honor to be in the presence of such masters of this art," she continued. "Ok, I'll do it," I mumbled under my breath. After that, my mom and I decided upon these three songs. Entharaani in Harikambhoji, Neevaada ne gana in Saaranga, and Veena Pustaka Dharinim in Vegavahini. Most days in the short time period before the competition, I practiced either early in the mornings or in the evenings after school. I still had very little confidence that I would do any good in this.

Let me tell you a bit about this competition. It ranges through the whole US covering all the regions. The preliminaries were held in four places around the country, Atlanta, New York/New Jersey, Chicago, and San Jose. The finals are held in San Jose. You give three krithis for the preliminaries and they may choose a couple for you to sing. They might ask you to sing manodharmam, if you're a junior however it was not mandatory for the prelims. In the finals, they have a number of rounds. The first round is varnams. They might ask you to sing the varnam in thisram or kandham or in any kala pramanam and also to start at a certain point in the varnam. We are to submit three varnams to the judges. They then advance some students to the krithi round and eliminate. In the finals, I think even the juniors were required to have some experience for manodharmam. For the seniors you need to be prepared with a thillana and there's a mini kutcheri with a mridangist and a violinist. After that, they give other awards and the main Carnatic Music Idol award. Of course we didn't know about these rules for the finals until after the prelims.

With blessings from my gurus (my mom and Thiruvarur SriS.Girish) and my parents relentless encouragement, I was all set to go for the preliminaries. While on the way to the preliminaries, I reclined back into my chair and took some deep breaths. "It's going to be ok," I thought. On the way my mom called my grandparents back in India and they all cheered me on, it helped. As my family and I went in the auditorium, the Maximum Media crew and this colossal auditorium fed my nervousness even more. My parents told me not to worry and left me in the place where the participants sat. There weren't tons of people sitting in the crowd which helped me a little bit. At first, I thought it would be extremely tough because I had mistaken the seniors as juniors. The seniors went first and I appreciated different aspects of each one's performance. As fast as a rabbit, it was soon the juniors' turn. We had already gotten when our turns were going to be and guess what they had said to me. "You'll be second"! I was sweating, my cheeks were red, and I was so nervous that my stomach felt like it was going to explode! I soon got called up and I plugged in my shruti box. The first song they asked me to sing was Veena Pustaka Dharinim starting from the Anupallavi. Although nervous as first, once I started singing I started enjoying. I sang and Smt.Sowmya said "Nee romba nana padare kanna." I felt at ease at once. Next, they told me to sing Nee vaada Ne gana at a fast speed. Finally, they asked if I sang ragam. I told them somewhat meekly that I have sung a little bit of it. I chose the ragam kharaharapiya which is the only ragam I've tried somewhat seriously at home before. I was unsure of it a little but as I started singing, it was as if my brain was sending the phrases to my throat automatically. The judges appreciated my efforts. All those compliments led up to a great moment for me and my parents. "You're spot selected!" shouted Sri Shashikiran. I couldn't believe it! I

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came in the car here thinking that I wouldn't do any good but that was reversed! We called my Guru Sri Girish on the way back home and he was so proud of me and I am so proud of him too.

I asked my mom if we would be able to go to San Jose and she said we'll see which usually means no. They were very proud of me and as a gift they got these very neat athletic shoes that I had always wanted. My parents were still deciding whether my mom and I should go since my dad was on call the finals weekend. Until one saying from my dad(its a once in a lifetime experience) made my mom want to go. The flights as usual are expensive but we decided to book the car, flight and a hotel. Soon after that, my dad dropped us off at the Philadelphia Airport to depart to Minneapolis, Minnesota then from there to San Jose, California. While at the gate, I dreamt of myself holding an award in front of the whole crowd cheering.

Well after the long boring ride and flight to San Jose, we crashed in our hotel room and I didn't have a chance to practice my songs because of that exhaustion. I had thought that I wouldn't do good because I didn't practice. When we got to the Sai Baba temple, the organizers were making sure if all the participants were there. We had immediately got to the seats to start the competition. I was in the first group of performers for the varnam round. When it was my turn, they asked me to sing thodi varnam also from the anupallavi and in akaaram in which I got a compliment from Shashikiran. The next round the fun round, was something to make the children feel relaxed and not scared. For our group, one after another we had to sing the Sankarabharanam scale after a beat(onnuthalli) which was pretty difficult for people in my group and I because of the fact that we had to pick up right after the person before us. We then were led back to our seats to listen to the other participants. I wasn't sure if I would make it to the final round because the other participants in my group sang very well. After listening to great performances by other participants, my group anxiously approached the stage to hear the results of who's going to the final round. The judges said that whoever is wearing blue is going to the final round. I looked at the color of my kurtha but it was a maroon color. I actually cried secretly while coming off stage and when they were announcing the people going to the final round. Until, one miraculous moment for me which gave me a boost of confidence. The next awards were star kids and the super star kid award. If you get one of these, it doesn't always mean you're going to the final round. I crossed my fingers tight when Shashikiran was going to tell everybody the Super Star Kid. "His name's meaning is the same as mine," Sri Shashikiran stated. A lot of people guessed Sashank as the answer. The next thing Shashikiran said was "correct." Everybody cheered, and I quickly walked on to the stage and did a huge namaskaram! That was just magnificent! "I guess now I've got tons of confidence to win the real award next time," I thought.

I enjoyed this competition very much because of how the judges made you feel. When they realized that you were very nervous, the judges tried to calm you down and make you perform to your best potential. I am all the more eager now to learn so much more from my Guru. Although I'd love to participate in competitions, I still enjoy singing for the joy it gives me, my family, friends and relatives. My family and I adore Carnatic music and my dream is to become a Carnatic Music singer and this is one of the baby steps that will help achieve my goal.

Awards and Honors

Padma awards were announced on January 26th and the following are some of the recipients in the "arts" category.

Among the Padma Bhushan awardees are Pandit Buddhadev Das Gupta (instrumental music – Sarod), Dr Trippunithwra Viswanathan Gopalakrishnan (classical vocal and instrumental music), M S Gopalakrishnan (instrumental music –violin),

The following personalities were selected for the Padma Shri award:

Zia Fariduddin Dagar (music: vocal), Ramachandra Subraya Hegde Chittani (Yakshagana dance drama), Shahid Parvez Khan (Music: sitar), Khan Manganiar (music: folk), Minati Mishra (art - Indian classical dance), Kalamandalm Sivan Nambootiri (Indian classical dance), Pandit Gopal Prasad Dubey (Chhau dance and choreography), Ramakant Gundecha (Indian classical music – vocal), Umakant Gundecha (Indian classical music- vocal).

Sruti audience is familiar with some of the Padma Sri honorees- Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan and the Gundecha brothers.

Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards:

The General Council of Sangeet Natak Akademi, the National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama, New Delhi, at its meeting held on 13-14 December 2011 elected eleven eminent personalities in the field of performing arts as Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellows (AKADEMI RATNA).

The Fellowship of the Akademi is the most prestigious and rare honor, which is restricted to a very limited number at a given time. Presently there are only 40 Fellows of the Sangeet Natak Akademi. Among the eleven nominees are Hariprasad Chaurasia, Shivkumar Sharma, Amjad Ali Khan, Umayalapuram Sivaraman, M.Chandrasekharan, Padma Subrahmanyam.

The General Council of the Akademi also selected thirty six persons from the fields of Music, Dance, Theatre and Puppetry for the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards (AKADEMI PURASKAR) for the year 2011.

The honour of Akademi Fellow has been conferred since 1954 and Akademi Award since 1952. They not only symbolize the highest standard of excellence and achievements on a national basis, but also recognize sustained individual work and contribution to the practice and appreciation of the arts through performance, teaching and scholarship. Among the Puraskar nominees in the field of music are J Venkataraman for Carnatic Vocal Music, E M Subramaniam (Ghatam), Ayyagari Syamasundaram (Veena) and Seshampatti T Sivalingam (Nagaswaram) for Carnatic Instrumental Music.

The Sangeet Natak Akademi has selected 33 artists of India up to the age of 40 years who have made a mark in their respective fields of performing arts for Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2010. The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar was introduced in the year 2006 with the objective of giving national recognition to outstanding talents in diverse fields of performing arts. Amongst the nominees are Savita Narasimhan for Carnatic Vocal Music; Embar Kannan (Violin) and G

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Guruprasanna (Kanjira) for Carnatic Instrumental Music.

As a part of the ongoing commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Sangeet Natak Akademi decided to institute a one-time honor of TAGORE SAMMAN to be awarded to 100 persons of the age of 75 years and above who have made significant contribution in the field of performing arts. It was further agreed that out of 100 Sammans, 50 may be at par with the Akademi Fellow and remaining 50 Sammans at par with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards.

Among the awardees are:

Sripada Pinakapani, R.K.Sreekanthan, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, M.S. Gopalakrishnan, N.Ramani, Vellore Ramabhadran, Guruvayur Dorai, Vyjayanthimala Bali, Kalanidhi Narayanan, M K Saroja (Tagore Akademi Ratna); T. Sankara Iyer- Carnatic Vocal, R.Visveswaran- Carnatic instrumental (Veena) and Bhagavatula Seetarama Sarma - Music for Dance (Tagore Akademi Puraskar).

Obituary:

Revered dance guru K.J. Sarasa, who devoted her life to a deep engagement with Bharatanatyam, passed away in Chennai on January 2, 2012. She was 78. A torch-bearer of the Vazhuvoor bani of Bharatanatyam, Sarasa teacher has had the distinction of innumerable arangetrams and recitals, including those of celebrated artistes such as Vyjayanthimala Bali, Baby Kamala and the Travancore Sisters Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini. In addition she has the distinction of being the first female nattuvanar. Noted dancers Rathna Kumar and Urmila Sathyarayanan are among her disciples who have made a mark in the field.

Sacred Music Festival in Thanjavur in March

For some years now, arts promoter Ranvir Shah and his Prakriti Foundation has been hosting the Festival of Sacred Music in Thiruvaiyaru, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. The intention is to use heritage spaces in this small town best known for Saint Thyagaraja for arts performances. Ranvir uses lights, color and flowers to create a special space for the recitals and hosts a variety of artistes. This year the Festival is to be held in early March.

Centenary Celebrations:

The year 2012 is the centenary year of Madurai Sri Mani Iyer, a true mahavidwan in his time. A number of events are being organized in Chennai and across the world. The Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana committee is marking the event with the sustaining sampradaya concert and other events

The centenary of legendary mridangam maestro Palghat Mani Iyer is being celebrated this year across the world. A major event was hosted at The Music Academy on January 28 with talks, recitals and conversations by well known musicians like T N Krishnan and Umayalpuram Sivaraman and T K Murthy.

The doyenne T. Brinda's centenary celebration is ongoing with major events across the world. Sruti's celebration "Tribute to T.Brinda" will occur in August 2012.

From the Marketing Committee

Following on from the successful celebration of Sruti's 25th year in 2011, the new marketing committee is pleased to have the opportunity to promote and support another season of outstanding programming during 2012. All the innovations from the previous years are being continued for 2012 including Season sponsorship packages that offer excellent value for patrons. These packages bundle in preferred seating tickets for all events, annual Sruti membership fees and CDs for most events into one low price. Please encourage your friends and family to take advantage of this special opportunity at <http://www.sruti.org/sruti/srutiMembership.asp> that offers the best value if subscribed early in the year.

The committee has already come up with a revised Sruti Logo that is more suitable for web and print media usage without the loss of fidelity. Audience contact through website, Facebook and E-Mails would continue and will be supplemented by other methods such as Google+ and LinkedIn. Joint marketing of events with other premier organizations such as Annenberg is planned for 2012 to attract a variety of target audience.

Sruti also offers opportunities for businesses to promote themselves to the Sruti audience through our Website and various publications. Please check out http://www.sruti.org/sruti/Sruti_2012_Media_Kit.pdf for further information.

New in 2012, Sruti has launched a Music download page making it easy for patrons to browse and buy music by all artistes who have performed in Sruti events in recent years. Please check out <http://www.sruti.org/sruti/inc-newsAmazon.asp>.

Nari Narayanan
On behalf of the Marketing Committee

Sruti Youth Group

Happy 2012 to everyone!

SRUTI YOUTH GROUP (SYG) is an ad-hoc sub-committee within the SRUTI organization. Students in high school as well as those studying in local colleges can become members of this group, if their families are Life or Annual members of SRUTI.

SYG is a great opportunity for the kids to learn and grow in performing arts and also to create awareness and exposure. It will help develop leadership and organizational skills and give opportunity to interact with senior artistes performing for Sruti.

Typical activities of SYG include poster presentations, photos and videos at SRUTI events, contributing articles to SRUTI publications and interviewing performing artists. Please see interviews conducted by the Sruti Youth Group in the past 2 years here: <http://www.youtube.com/user/srutiyoungroup>

As a board member of SRUTI 2012, I am delighted with the opportunity to mentor the SYG this year. We have a bunch of

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talented, enthusiastic youngsters ably led by co-presidents Veena Kanumalla and Karthik Pillutla. We strongly encourage all youngsters to consider joining the SYG.

Please contact me for more information-
Uma Sivakumar - sivakumaruma@hotmail.com

Margazhi Season in Chennai
by Siddhartha Jagannath
Siddhartha is a 6th grader and learns carnatic music

Chennai's Music season is simply unique. We have a hard time figuring out which programs to attend and entertain ourselves. There are carnatic vocal and instrumental concerts, dances, temple and heritage tours, lecture demonstrations, dramas, kathakalakshepams, award ceremonies with interesting speakers, and tours at the bronze gallery.

My brother and I get ready for these events with a bottle of water, herbal insect repellent and our soft cotton veshtis which are airy and keep the pesky mosquitoes away.

Being a lover of Carnatic music, I most often find myself more at carnatic concerts than anything else. Some venues/places are more special and intimate than others - Musri Mama's house concerts, Shastry Hall and the fifth row downstairs (because it is elevated by a step and offers a great view) at the Bhavan. The rasikas who frequent these venues also make it special and interesting. Some are funny and nice, while others can be rude. There are many elderly folks who attend the katcheris to pass the time.

There is one large man who is seen with a case full of food. He carries it diligently like carrying a briefcase to work. Inside, a multi-tiered tiffin carrier stands - full of uppuma, idlis, chips, mysore pak and chundal for this food and music lover. Whenever I happen to glance at him he is seen eating.

Another time, during a T.M. Krishna concert a middle aged man snuck into my seat as I stepped on the aisle to grab a handkerchief from my mother who was seated across from me. We had come two hours early for this concert, since it was an "all are welcome" concert. I patiently listened to ALL the speeches before the concert (twelve total!) just for good seats. Before I knew it, my seat was gone! I returned to my seat with a questioning look (out of fear) only to receive a scolding. Then he shooed me away as if I were a common housefly perched on his tea cup.

Of course the nice old mamas and mamis far exceed the nasty ones. One such mama, we call him "Treat Mama" fondly, is an ardent rasika at the sabhas. Treat Mama is probably in his eighties, has poor vision, a charming smile, and knows every composition. He introduces us proudly to his friends saying that "the future of carnatic music is in safe hands because of children like these."

Treat Mama had been promising us a treat every time he met us. "Ayyoo marande poyitten, Naalikki kattayamma chocolate konduvaren" (Ohhh I forgot, I will certainly bring you chocolate tomorrow). Unfortunately, his memory consistently failed him and he would only remember the promise made when he saw us the next day.

The day arrived when Treat Mama's memory finally functioned. Sitting behind us, he gently tapped my shoulder during T.N.S.'s concert. Assuming that he was quizzing me on the ragam I turned around and whispered "Thodi". He tapped me again and said "look here." I craned my neck to see and behold!!! There in Treat Mama's hand was a box of toffees. I immediately knew this was for us. The glossy wrappers glittered brightly in the dimly lit hall. Just the sight of those wrappers made my mouth water. In order not to appear obviously greedy, I turned my attention to the stage.

Then the moment I was waiting for came. I felt another tap on my shoulder. I turned around to see Treat Mama. In his shriveled hand lay a golden wrapper. I took it with a grateful nod. The moment was perfect- I was a little hungry, TNS mama's ragam was spectacular, my mother would not have probed into the ingredients of the treat out of respect for Treat Mama, my brother was sitting nowhere close by for a share of it and a promise made was finally kept. "Everything aligned so perfectly" I thought to myself. I carefully unwrapped the treat to avoid any noise from the wrapper and to my big surprise - NO TREAT! Mama had given me an empty wrapper with no candy in it!! I was shocked! There was no way I could have dropped the candy. Shock turned to dismay, which turned into betrayal. I relied on TNS mama's nerval to console me. By the end of the concert I could only laugh at the situation. I realized that Treat Mama's memory functioned, but his vision had failed. As I left the hall that evening he smiled at me lovingly from a distance and waved goodbye.

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Sanjay Subrahmanyam, R.K.Shriramkumar, Priyadarsini Govind, Ranjani and Gayathri, S.Sowmya, Shashank, Jayanthi and Kumaresh and more are performing for Sruti this year.

Annual Individual Sponsor - \$200**
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<http://www.sruti.org/sruti/srutiMembership.asp>

Send a check to: SRUTI/Attn: Venkat Kilambi
3055 Highley Road, Audubon, PA 19403

*** Open to all members and valid for most events in the calendar year, except for specified concerts, as determined by the board of directors*

A delightful curtain down on Sruti 2011
Vidyasankar Sundaresan

Kamalakaran Vinjamuri, a highly talented youngster, performed a short violin concert as part of Sruti Day celebrations to mark the end of the organization's 25th year celebrations in 2011. Aply supported by Athreya Nathan on the Mridangam, Sowmiya Narayanan on Ghatam and Vedapraveen Machiraju on Khanjira, this US born teenager regaled the Sruti audience with an hour and a half of wholesome Carnatic music.

Right at the beginning, the Todi Adi Tala Varnam, *Era na pai*, struck a note of classicism, artistry and musical knowledge, demonstrating the values that Kamalakaran has fully internalized at a very early age. The concert encompassed other heavy Ragas, Varali (*Kaa vaa vaa*) and Kharaharapriya (*Chakkani Rajamargamu*), as well as the lighter tunes of the Ragamalika, *Kurai onrum illai*, and concluded with *Bhagyada Lakshmi* which he played in Madhyamavati. Kamalakaran has got very good control over the violin, in both its bowing and fingering aspects. This imparts a level of technical competence to his concert that is difficult to achieve at his young age, and for this, he deserves full praise. His vision of the heavy Ragas of Carnatic music seems to be steeped in the time honored idiom and he is clearly deeply involved, heart and soul, in the music even as he plays for an audience.

Looking and listening to him play the violin lends us an assurance that youngsters in our community have a role model for Carnatic music who shares their own background. I would like to extend the same words to Athreya Nathan, the Mridangist. This young man who is just ready to step into college has a clear talent for Carnatic rhythm and he displays a laudable ability to accompany well and embellish the concert. Vedapraveen Machiraju, another teenager, who played the Khanjira, had a more subdued role, while Sowmiya Narayanan, a friend of the Vinjamuri family, has been encouraging and contributing to Kamalakaran's musical experience by accompanying him on the Ghatam in his concerts. The three percussionists ably supported the violinist and their Tani Avartanam was crisp and to the point. Carnatic music performance practice calls upon the main artist not only to be a musician but also a bit of a conductor who has to manage and balance the contributions of the accompanying artists to the performance. Kamalakaran and his accompanists proved that they could come together as a musical team under a leader.

I will add only one caveat to my warm praise of this youngster. Kamalakaran seems to have a penchant towards a slightly Kunnakkudi-esque handling of *gamakas* and *prayogas*. Although it is a bit too early in his personal and professional development to judge fully, there was more than one occasion during the concert when I felt that this is where his natural inclination and personal style will take him in the future. As a well-wisher, I would caution him against letting this tendency develop into too much of an idiosyncratic style too soon, as this can easily slip into a premature perception being built up by audiences. This could possibly be counter-productive to the further musical development of Kamalakaran and he has great potential to mature into a complete musician in his own independent right!

Sruti Celebrates Sri Thyagaraja Aradhana: Saturday March 17, 2012

- Individual or group registration may be completed on-line once the registration opens on **March 1st, 2012 at 6 AM**.
- Individual or group participation is restricted to Thyagaraja Compositions only.
- Registration of participants will be accepted in the order that they are received.
- In the event of a very large number of registrations, family members of current Sruti members (i.e. Life Members or 2012 Annual Members) will be given preference. Please indicate membership status when registering online. For group registrations, at least one member of the group is required to be a member to be eligible for priority consideration. You may become a member now to be eligible for priority consideration.
- Please register for only one song/slot per individual or group and do not perform any Alapana, Niraval or kalpana swarams. This exception is not applicable to chittai swarams in the composition.
- Sruti will not provide any accompaniments on stage. If you wish, you may bring your own accompaniments.
- The session (morning or afternoon) in which the participants will perform will be determined by drawing lots after the close of registration. Participants will be notified of their session by email and must be available to perform anytime within their allotted session. Participants must be present when their turn is announced or they will be moved to the end of the session.

We strongly encourage participants to attend the main concert as well as the rest of the day's performances as a courtesy to others.

For any questions, please contact Mrs. Uma Sivakumar at 484-437-6025 or email to srutiphila@gmail.com.

Sruti received a little piece on aspects of learning of the arts from one of our young members....

Hi, my name is Shreya Srinivasan. I am in 6th grade and I am 11. I have been dancing for 6 years and it has made me more disciplined and organized. It has also made me more focused. These characteristics help me a lot in school, I am able to focus and get everything done. Dance also has helped me to build my confidence! I am now able to dance on stage calmly instead of worrying. I also understand that when things get hard I shouldn't just stop and quit, I should keep trying until I get it. One of my favorite pieces is Shabdham. I like how we get to show face expressions! When I show face expressions, I feel everyone and anyone can truly understand me. Since I am Indian, I wanted to learn this art form. Even though we are thousands of miles away from India, dance brings it closer. My dance experience has helped me a lot and I will continue this journey as long as I can.

Shreya learns Bharatanatyam from Vasanthi Nagaraj.

SRUTI 2012 Spring Season*

March 17th

Thyagaraja Aradhana, 8 am at *Hindu Temple of Delaware*

April 14th

Appreciation session: "Musical and lyrical beauty in compositions of Muthuswami Dikshitar", 4 pm

Violin solo concert featuring R. K. Shriramkumar accompanied by K. Arun Prakash and B. S. Purushothaman, 6 pm at the Agnes Irwin school's *West-Wike Theater in Rosemont, PA*

April 28th

Bharatanatyam Dance presentation by Priyadarsini Govind, accompanied by a live orchestra, 8 pm at the *Goodhart Hall, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA*

May 12th

Carnatic Vocal Concert by Ranjani and Gayathri, accompanied by H. N. Bhaskar on the violin and Manoj Siva on the mridangam, 4:30 pm at the Agnes Irwin school's *West-Wike Theater in Rosemont, PA*.

June 2nd

Appreciation session: "Tribute to Shri Palghat Mani Iyer" by Anantha R. Krishnan , 4 pm

"Strings Attached", an instrumental duet featuring Jayanthi Kumaresh on the Veena, Kumaresh on the violin accompanied by Anantha R. Krishnan on mridangam and Trichy Krishna on the ghatam, 5:30 pm at *Mitchell Auditorium, Drexel University, Philadelphia*

SRUTI 2012 Fall Season*

August 25th

Appreciation Session "Tribute to T. Brinda" by Kiranavali Vidyasankar, 10 am

Concert by B. Balasubrahmaniyan at the *Science Center Auditorium at Montgomery County Community College*

September 15th

Carnatic vocal concert by Sanjay Subrahmanyam accompanied by S. Varadarajan on the violin and Neyveli Venkatesh on the mridangam

September 29th

"Spirit", concert featuring Flute Shashank and the Manganiar folk musicians, 7 pm at *The Painted Bride Art Center, Philadelphia*

November 3rd

Bharatanatyam Dance by Rama Vaidyanathan accompanied by live orchestra at 8 pm at the *Zellerbach Theater at the Annenberg Center, Philadelphia*

November 10th

"Influences of Folk Music on Carnatic Music", a thematic concert by S. Sowmya and Bharat Sundar accompanied by Embar Kannan and B.U.Ganesh Prasad on the violin, Neyveli Narayanan and Trivandrum Balaji on the mridangam and K.V. Gopalakrishnan on the kanjira, 4 pm at the *Science Center Auditorium at Montgomery County Community College*

*(Programs and artists are subject to change.)

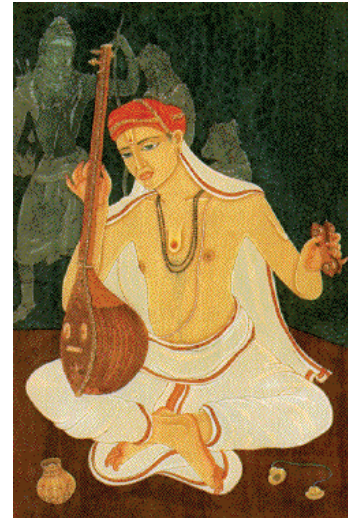


SRUTI

The India Music and Dance Society
1504 Pintail Drive, Audubon, PA 19403 • www.sruti.org

Presents
**THYAGARAJA
ARADHANA**

at
Hindu Temple of Delaware
760 Yorklyn Dr, Hockessin DE



PROGRAM

- 8:00 AM Pooja
8:15 AM Group rendering of Utsava Sampradaya and Pancharatna kritis
10:45 AM Individual/Group participation
12:45PM Lunch (included as a part of entrance donation)
1:30 PM Concert of the day
Ashvin Bhogendra - Vocal
L. Ramakrishnan - Violin
Akshay Anantapadmanabhan - Mridangam
4:00 PM Individual/Group participation (Continued)
7:00 PM Dinner (Available for purchase from Temple Kitchen)

A donation of \$10 per person or \$20 per family is appreciated**

**Includes one lunch coupon for individuals and up to four lunch coupons per family.
Additional lunch coupons will be available for purchase (\$5 per coupon)

**Online Registration for Individual/Group Participation will be open at
6 AM on March 1, 2012 at www.sruti.org**

**For more information please visit www.sruti.org or call 267-797-7006 or e-mail
srutiphila@gmail.com**

**Sruti 2012 Sponsorship Passes will be available for sale
Also available for purchase now online at <http://www.sruti.org/sruti/srutiMembership.asp>**



Ashvin D Bhogendra (D.B. Ashvin) hails from a family of musicians. His maternal grandfather Kalaimamani Late Shri T.K.Rangachary was one of the doyens of Carnatic Music and his paternal great-grandfather Dharmavaram Ramakrishnamacharlu is one of the greatest playwrights of Telugu drama. Ashvin was initiated into carnatic vocal by his mother Smt Mallika Jayanth Kumar at the age of 5. He was then under the tutelage of Shri B Seetharama Sharma and Kalaimamani Late Shri Vairamangalam Lakshminarayanan for about 15 years. He is currently undergoing advanced training under Shri D Seshachary (Hyderabad Brothers). Ashvin has been performing regularly in the Chennai music season at leading sabhas including The Music Academy, Karthik Fine Arts, Narada Gana Sabha and Krishna Gana Sabha. He has received the Best Concert Award in the junior category by the Music Academy during the 2009-10 season, D.K.Pattammal award of excellence by Kartik Fine Arts in the 2009-10 season, best vocalist at Krishna Gana Sabha Gokulashtami series. Ashvin is a resident of New Jersey and a regular performer in various US venues. A devoted allegiance to the traditional bani of his grandfather's, a rich resonant voice, inborn sense of laya and stress on proper understanding and delineation of sahitya are some of the outstanding attributes of Ashvin's music.

L. Ramakrishnan hails from a musical family and was formally initiated into a musical odyssey by his mother at the age of 2. He was trained in vocal music for a period of 8 years. He commenced his schooling in Carnatic Violin at the age of ten under the able guidance of Smt. Visalam Vageeswar at the Shanmukhananda Vidyalaya, Mumbai. Ramakrishnan performed his first solo concert at the age of 12 at Shanmukhananda Hall, Mumbai. He came under the wings of the distinguished violin maestro Kum.A.Kanyakumari at the age of 13. It was during this phase that he learnt the importance of vocal orientation in instrument playing and the proper enunciation of Sahitya. He imbibed the art of accompaniment at an early age from the revered Guru. He has performed with her in her grand musical ensembles on numerous occasions. He has also strengthened his repertoire by learning from Shri. T.K. Govinda Rao and Smt. T.R. Balamani. Ramakrishnan has accompanied many senior and upcoming artists: T. K. Govinda Rao, A. Kanyakumari, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, M. Balamuralikrishna, Abhishek Raghuram, to name a few. Among the many honors and awards conferred on him are Naada Bhooshanam – Nadopasana (Mumbai), Shanmukha Mani – Shanmukhananda (Mumbai), Best Violinist in sub-senior slot – Music Season (Music Academy). Ramakrishnan has performed all over India and continues the trend of being a sought after violinist across the United States. He currently works as the senior tech lead at Aetna in Connecticut.

Akshay Anantapadmanabhan is an energetic mridangam artist striving to explore his versatility in South Indian percussion to create an impact through Indian classical and World music in the United States. Akshay began his mridangam training at the age of six under the tutelage of Sri T.S. Nandhakumar, a renowned faculty member in Shanmukhananda (Mumbai). After moving to America when he was nine, Akshay started learning from Dr. Venkat Natarajan, the head instructor of Sankara Academy (New Jersey). As he grew as a percussionist, Akshay also had the opportunity of receiving advanced training in mridangam and kanjira from the world-renowned percussion maestro, Professor T.H. Subash Chandran. Following the experienced mentorship and the creative rhythmic prowess of his guru, Sri T.H. Subash Chandran, Akshay continues to learn and improve as a musician. Akshay has been performing in Carnatic (South Indian Classical) concerts, accompanying several distinguished artists such as Sri R.K. Srikantan, Sri O.S. Thyagarajan, Sri Chitravina Ravikiran, Sri Flute Shashank, Sri Maharajapuram S. Srinivasan, Sri Sikkil Gurucharan and others. In April 2007, Akshay had the opportunity of performing in a percussion ensemble concert led by his guru, Prof. T. H. Subash Chandran, featuring other top percussion maestros - Sri N.Ganesh Kumar (Kanjira) and K.Sekar (Tavil). Akshay has performed in various venues in United States and India. He has performed at the leading sabhas during the December Music Season in Chennai making his debut performance at The Music Academy in December 2007. Akshay has also accompanied several accomplished sitar artists such as Pandit Shivanth, Pandit Deobrat Mishra and Pandit Subroto Roy Chowdhury. He has collaborated with Latin jazz, rock and Brazilian musicians in unique showcases of Indian percussion. He also teaches several students and is part of the teaching and performing team at Sarva Sree Foundation, Iowa.

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Media	Description	Size	Frequency	Annual Price
Website (http://www.sruti.org)	Reaches 800-1000 people	Button Size (170x95 pixels)	Season*	\$50
			Annual	\$100
		Banner size (420 x 95 pixels)	Season	\$125
			Annual	\$250
Email Blasts	20+ blasts per year Reaches 1000+ families	Button Size (170x95 pixels)	Season	\$50
			Annual	\$100
		Banner size (420 x 95 pixels)	Season	\$125
			Annual	\$250
Sruti Notes (Newsletters)	3 publications per year (Page size: 8.5" x 11") Reaches 750+ people	¼ page	Per Issue	\$25
		½ page	Per Issue	\$50
		Whole page	Per Issue	\$75
Sruti Ranjani (Annual Magazine)	1-2 publication per year (Page size: 8.5" x 11") Reaches 750+ people	¼ page	Per Issue	\$50
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		Whole page color	Per Issue	\$500
		Inside Front/Back Cover	May/Sep Issue	\$500/\$1,500
		Outside Back Cover	May/Sep Issue	\$1,000/\$2,000
Program Notes	1 per concert 10+ concerts during the year (Page Size: 4.25"x5.5")	Business card (2"x3.5")	Program	\$15
		¼ page	Program	\$25
		½ page	Program	\$50
		Whole page	Program	\$75

* Note: A season is either Spring Concert Season (Mar-June) or Fall Concert Season (Aug-Dec)

Please send in your ad materials to the attention of Nari Narayanan - narinarayanan@gmail.com .

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You may be able to double or even triple your gift to Sruti. Many employers sponsor matching gift programs to match contributions made by their employees to non-profit organizations. To find out if your company does, visit your company's human resources department. Complete the form provided by your company and mail it to Sruti or bring it to one of the Sruti events. We will take care of the rest.

In 2011 we received matching donations from the following corporations in our area — *The Vanguard Group, Prudential, Merck Susquehanna International Group of Companies (SIG), PNC Bank and Johnson & Johnson.*


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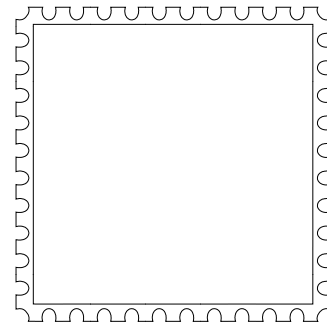


Sruti

The India Music
& Dance Society,
Philadelphia

www.sruti.org

1504 Pintail Drive
Audubon, PA 19403-1857



Calendar of Events Spring 2012*

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