



# Sruti Notes

A Publication of SRUTI - The India Music & Dance Society

www.sruti.org E-mail: srutiphila@gmail.com

Volume 16, Issue 2,

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## President's Note

Dear Indian Classical Music and Dance Rasikas:

Greetings! Hope you enjoyed an India-like summer in Philadelphia as the board is gearing up to present to you a very exciting lineup of concerts in the fall. This year, Indian classical music mourns the loss of music stalwarts Pt. Ravishankar, Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman, MS Gopalakrishnan and Maha Guru Sri Pinakapani. We are going to miss them dearly, and their contributions to the art will be cherished by generations to come.

The 2013 spring season was a phenomenal success, starting with the Thyagaraja Aradhana in April, featuring an American born young musician in Ramakrishnan Murthy, followed by an exquisite dance performance featuring the contrasting styles of Odissi and Kandyani by Nrithyagram and the Srilankan dancers. Sri Malladi Suribabu's workshop on manodhruma sangeetham, varnam and kritis in the Pinakapani style and a vocal concert by the upcoming Kunnakudi Balamurali Krishna kept us busy in the remainder of April. In May and June, we had the fortune of presenting a lively performance of the Malladi brothers with a memorable RTP in charukesi followed by a lilting performance by the Mandolin duo of Shrinivas & Rajesh to wrap up the spring season.

We were overwhelmed by the number of families that came forward to sponsor the 2013 events. We thank you for strong attendance of the spring events and enthusiastic feedback on their quality. Your survey responses bear testimonial to our quest to continually improve the concert experience with quality artists presented in halls with a good ambience. I am happy to share highlights of feedback from a few Rasikas. On Malladi's concert, one of the rasikas who had attended hundreds of classical performances in Tamil Nadu noted, "After more than a fifty year absence, it was a pleasure to hear the caliber of the music here in the States. It was an experience not often repeated since the sixties." We are pleased to hear from another rasika who found Mandolin concert "scintillating, most satisfying and eminently enjoyable." The post-concert dinner was much appreciated by our sponsors.

Our Resources Committee headed by Ramana Kanumalla continues to produce outstanding results in securing a new grant from the Knights Arts foundation for \$15,000. The Knight Arts grant will allow us to present an event for the next three years starting with Shujaat Khan Recital in fall this year. Thanks to the guidance of Kirthi Kothapalli, we secured \$2,000 of corporate funding from Exelon for the Mandolin concert. To defray the costs of production, we collaborated with Montco to present a high quality dance production at a fraction of the cost and the collaboration with the Hindu temple yielded the temple hall free of charge for Malladi's and we secured a donation from the ART group. We thank our members, sponsors, granting agencies, collaborating partners and local businesses that advertised with us for their support and generosity.

Marketing committee chaired by Nari Narayanan created pleasing flyers and other marketing material to relentlessly promote the events through various media channels including community letters to increase the reach of our publicity. It was very heartening for the volunteers to see the growing numbers in attendance and the new faces of both Indian and mainstream folks amongst our audiences.

The Publications Committee chaired by Suresh Tyagarajan has been working hard producing the well-designed program notes, keeping the website updated with accurate information and publishing new editions of Sruti Notes with concert impressions and other engaging material.

(Continued from page 1)

Member services headed by Sundar Arunapuram has done a phenomenal job in managing the evites for preferred seating, serving post-concert dinners and distributing concert recordings to our loyal sponsors and members who have supported Sruti through the years. Madhavi Ratnagiri is working hard to master the concert recordings.

Our treasurer, Venkat Kilambi, continues to keep us on a good financial track and solid accounting while helping with the ticket sales. In addition, planning of events for 2014 has started under the leadership of Sunanda Gandham.

The Sruti youth group continues to be our backbone for photography, videography, ushering services, artist interviews and MC-ing for Aradhana. We encourage all youth to come forward to grow and nurture the SYG and to become future leaders of Sruti. We need to fill the roles of outgoing SYG co-presidents - Veena, Karthik, and members Madhav and Pranav. We thank them for all their hard work and wish them great success in college.

We continue to go green to further reduce the volume of printed material relying on digital media. A new initiative will distribute Sruti notes and the concerts digitally are making the CD medium optional.

We open this fall season with Composers Day similar to the Thyagaraja Aradhana on September 7 with a vocal concert by local artist, Roopa Mahadevan. Individual participation registration for Composers Day opens on August 18 at 8 am. On September 28, we join hands with the Annenberg Performing Arts Center to present Ustaad Shujaat Khan in tribute to the legend Pt. Ravi Shankar. In keeping with our educational and outreach focus, Penn will host a master class by Shujaat for their South Asian students. Shujaat's style of playing sitar, known as the gayaki ang, is imitative of the subtleties of the human voice. We are pleased to bring back Vijay Siva on October 26 for rasikas who have a keen ear for lyrical beauty in a vocal concert. Sri Krishna Parijatham, a Kuchipudi Dance Ballet, will mark a tribute to another legend, Guru Padmabhushan Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam by his senior disciples - Kuchipudi quartet of Shoba Natarajan, Sasikala Penumarthy, Kamala Reddy, and Revathi Komanduri, on November 16. We will conclude the season with Sruti Day on December 7.

I would like to thank the hard working board and committee members who are generous with their time to diligently plan and present high quality programs and digital and print publications.

Together we can pull off a break-even year financially. Your strong attendance motivates the many Sruti board

members and volunteers to work harder and also bring in much needed ticket revenue. We request your continued support with concert attendance of all upcoming fall programs with family and friends. Tickets for the events are on sale through our online ticketing system ([sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com)) as well as box-offices of the collaborating organization. We encourage you to proactively buy tickets online for good seats when you receive notifications. As you are aware, all the fall concerts are free for 2013 sponsors and the sponsors are assured preferred seating when attendance is confirmed via evites. Fall season ticket package covering all concerts at discounted price is also now available at [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com). Please spread the word to your friends to join Sruti mailing list by emailing [srutiphila@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphila@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing you at all the fall events for memorable concert experiences.

Thank you,  
Ravi Pillutla, President  
On behalf of the SRUTI Board of Directors

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#### From the Publications and Outreach Committee

Dear Friends!

The Public Outreach Committee is thankful to you for your active participation this year. We are looking forward to an exciting Fall and rest of 2013. We have a good variety of performances encompassing Music and Dance art forms from the culturally-rich sub-continent. We are looking forward to interacting and exchanging ideas with you to constantly better the spread of events that we proudly present. Please contact us at [srutiphila@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphila@gmail.com).

On behalf of SRUTI Publications & Outreach Committee,  
Tyagarajan Suresh.

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#### From the Marketing Committee

Sruti Marketing Committee would like to thank our sponsors, members and audience for your outstanding support again during our Spring our 2013 concerts. There has been more recognition of the excellent value offered by our Sponsorship / season ticket packages and the quality of our events. Compared to 169 sponsors in 2012, we have already reached a count of 215 sponsors for 2013, achieving a 27% increase. To ensure more people take advantage of the sponsor benefits, we have made available special prices for Fall 2013 sponsorships at our website <http://sruti.org/sruti/srutiMembership.asp>. Bundled tickets offering admission to all our Fall 2013 events are also available at [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com) for a limited time. Please note that this bundle includes premium tickets for Shujaat Khan Sitar concert available at Annenberg Box

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*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.*

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office at a normal rate of \$55.

Our Spring 2013 events were well attended. Feedback from surveys also were very positive with 100% "Excellent" rating for Nrithyagram and 97% rating for both Malladi brothers and Mandolin Duet events as "Excellent" or "Good"

Our **Fall 2013 Lineup** also promises to be exceptional:

**Sep 7** – Composers Day with Roopa Mahadevan concert at Montco. Registration for Individual and group participation opens on August 18, 2013 in Sruti website. Free for Sponsors. All others including individual and group participants would need to buy tickets that are now available at [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com). Free lunch will be provided to all the audience.

*"Faithful to the sruti, pure in the notes, replete with brigas and easy at the lower and upper octaves alike, Roopa Mahadevan delivered a wholesome concert."* – The Hindu, Dec 27, 2012

**Sep 28** – Shujaat Khan Sitar concert at Annenberg. Tickets are available from Annenberg Box office. Links are provided from [sruti.org](http://sruti.org) and [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com). For sponsors (including Fall 2013 sponsors), premium tickets (normal cost \$55) would be provided free by Sruti. Accurate and prompt evite responses for Sponsors is vital for this concert. We cannot guarantee premium seats otherwise. If you accept the evite and do not attend the concert, Sruti will still have to pay Annenberg for the tickets. Non-sponsors or sponsors who need extra tickets can use discount code "SRUTI" at Annenberg Box office to get 25% discount.

*"With Shujaat in prime form, where else would one find such an elfin and sprightly tone that seems to set up gleaming sound bubbles, ambling on as if in a merry dance, such lightness and pliancy of touch generating a host of light-winged graces, a never ending source of aesthetic delight."* - The Hindu, January 2008

*"Reflective, beautiful, Shujaat Khan is one of today's most prolific ambassadors merging classical Indian music with newly formed styles"* - Whole Life Magazine, USA, February, 2013

**Oct 26** – Vijay Siva Vocal concert at Agnes Irwin. Tickets are now available at [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com).

*"The verve with which Vijay Siva presented the kritis showed his fidelity to classicism."* – The Hindu, Dec 8, 2011

*"Vijay Siva seemed to transcend performance to achieve intense focus, precision and raga bhava. To listen to him was to witness a yogi in action, totally immersed in his art."* – Sruti magazine Feb 2013

**Nov 16** – Kuchipudi Dance Ballet at Delaware temple. Tribute to Kuchipudi Maestro Vempati Chinna Satyam by his students Shoba Natarajan, Sasikala Penumarthi, Ka-

mala Reddy and Revathi Komanduri. Tickets are now available at [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com).

*"Guru Vempati Chinna Satyam — the very name conjures up a splendid image of Kuchipudi dance; it is rather impossible to imagine what this great dance form would have been without him."*

- The Hindu, October 25, 2012

We look forward to seeing you at all Sruti Fall events. We also need your active help in promoting Sruti and its mission. Please E-mail your friends and copy [srutiphi-la@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphi-la@gmail.com) to get them added to our mailing list. Join Sruti at Facebook, Google+ and Twitter as well. Links are available at [www.sruti.org](http://www.sruti.org).

Nari Narayanan  
Director, Marketing and Publicity

### Ramakrishnan Murthy's enjoyable concert Review by Rasikan

Many consider that Chennai is the citadel of Carnatic music (CM). Most of the present day musicians grew up in that city and live there. So, can a person brought up elsewhere, especially in this country, make a mark in the CM world? Twenty three year old Ramakrishnan Murthy, who was raised in Los Angeles and has a degree in computer science from the University of California, Irvine, is proving that it is possible. He is one of the rising stars in CM today.

Ramakrishnan Murthy, Ram as he likes to be called, was the featured artiste at the 26th Thyagaraja Aradhana celebrated by SRUTI on April 6th at the Delaware Temple. V.V.S. Murari accompanied him on the violin and the senior vidwan Arun Prakash on the mridangam. Possessed with a pliable, if somewhat soft voice, Ram delighted the audience with chaste music.

Ram started with a brief alapana in Keeravani followed by the kriti, Kaligiyuntegadha. I thought it was bit unusual to begin a concert with a weighty piece. He quickly returned to a more traditional mode with a crisp Anupama in Atana.

A modern trend among Carnatic musicians is to spend a lot of time elaborating a minor ragam. Ram's nod in this direction was Janaranjani (Smarane sukham). He followed it with a bhava laden Mokshamulu galalde (Saramathi) starting in the anupallavi in the style of some older vidwans.

Then came the masterly Kalyani (Nidhi sala sukham). The beautiful alapana had classicism written all over it. Most musicians render neraval/kalpana swaram for this kriti at *mamatha bandana*. However, Ram chose *sumathy Thyagaraja* instead, an interesting touch.

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After a short and crisp Tani by Arun Prakash, Ram started elaborating Karaharapriya. I was wondering if he was planning on thanam pallavi. True enough he did exactly that.

It is a moot point if a RTP is appropriate in a Thyagaraja Aradhana concert. I believe, Thyagaraja Aradhana is primarily, if not only, to pay our homage to the great composer. We do this by inviting musicians to present only his compositions. The concert format is not followed. For instance, varnams/javalis/tillanas are not presented. In keeping with that spirit, I feel that RTP should also be eschewed.

Interestingly the pallavi was from the famous kriti, Ramane samanamevvaru.

Ram ended the concert with a short virutham in Nadanamkriya and the kriti Karunajalade in that ragam.

Murari, who has risen to be a regular in the concert circuit, gave able support. Arun known for his soft touches and studied understatement was a source of encouragement to the young singer.

I believe that Ram has a very bright future. He should be an inspiration for the many youngsters learning CM in America.

*An ardent admirer and lover of Carnatic Music, Rasikan has been a regular contributor and supporter of Sruti.*

### **Samhara - Bridging Odissi, Bharatnatyam and Kandyen dance**

Reviewed by Anwesha Dutta

Surupa Sen, Nrityagram Ensemble and Chitrasena dance company presented their dazzling collaborative works on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at Montgomery County Community College. Nrityagram popularly known as the dance village, was established by the late Pratima Gauri Bedi to popularize Odissi and other art forms. Today, Nrityagram is taking the language of dance to a different level through experimental choreography in collaboration with Sri Lankan Kandyen dancers, the Chitrasena dance company.

Nrityagram has proven that the amalgamation and creative synthesis of classical and semi-classical music and dance can attract the spirit of our next generation (both Indian and non-Indian audience groups). To the delight of the Philadelphia community, the dancers brought to us Samhara. We witnessed true magic in action with Samhara- a new work by Nrityagram that explores two classical Indian dance forms, Odissi and Bharata Natyam, and Kandyen Dance from Sri Lanka, to create a seamless

work that reflects the cultural connections of the diverse peoples of South Asia.

The absolutely brilliant Odissi dancers started with a graceful inaugural item called Arpanam that elevated the audience's spirit in perfect harmony with the live music. This dance came alive through an elegant celebration of the power of Goddess Parvati and the vibrancy of Shankara. Then we saw the Kandyen dancers for the first time and the words that came to mind were "agile, swift, and strong." Though Kandyen dance has a semi classical touch to it, its principles of sthanakas, depth in angles and complexity of postures is very much parallel to the geometrical vocabulary of a classical dance like Bharatnatyam and Odissi. The comparative movements shown by the Kandyen dancers and the Odissi dancers together in the dance called "Five Elements" were majestic and delightful to say the least.

The next item, which is a fairly common production item, was Vibhakta or Ardhanadeeswara. This was beautifully described with live enactment as the duality of the human spirit. Even the delicate Drishti bheda or eye movements were deeply expressive which helped educate the audience about the concept prior to the beginning of this intricate dance. All of us have watched Ardhanadeeswara with many other dance companies, but this presentation truly brought the dual spirit alive in a very creative and deep spiritual way. The enthralling movements by Ms. Surupa Sen and Bijoyini Satpathy were so intense that the audience felt united with the divine. This dance was the highlight of the show and the excellent stances, nimble footwork and brilliant Tandava stole the audience's heart and soul. The lifts and kicks were synchronized to perfection. Also, the combinations of string steps called "arasas" (similar to Jathis/Korvais in Bharatnatyam) were executed with precision and energy.

After that we witnessed Geeta Govinda and felt Radha's heart break deeply upon her separation from Lord Krishna. Once again Radha was a true heroine live in front of us, not just a character from a story. Finally, when we got to the finale, we saw the young Kandyen dancers again, magically intertwined with the excellent music from the Kandyen drums (Cataberra). Their leaps, lunges, depth of movements and dexterity reminded me of the marriage of performing arts with acrobatics. Most importantly, I saw our next generation totally enriching our traditions to greater heights. The finale was truly splendid with a very unique and lively presentation of a jugalbandi between the two dance styles with utmost energy, perfection and agility that showcased every single body angle and movement with a strong counterpart in both styles. The live musicians were majestic and in perfect harmony with the dancers' spirit and technique. The only opportunity for refinement would be enhancing the overall impact through some thematic stage art and better alignment of the costumes with colored lighting.

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We were spellbound in the audience watching this absolutely perfect presentation of a very complex dance production and kept wondering, how does a group elevate themselves to that level? When I asked Ms. Surupa Sen what her message is for our dance students, she said “Be creative and practice, practice, practice.” After all true perfection can only be achieved through “sadhana” or by worshipping the art. At Nrityagram they practice 8-10 hours a day, including cross-training of dancers in multiple dance styles which requires the young Kandyans dancers to travel from Sri Lanka to Bangalore. In conclusion, all of our youth in the Philadelphia area who are all studying Indian performing arts under wonderful gurus, please remember that it is your responsibility to take our arts to a higher level of elegance through innovation and dedication.

*Anwesha Dutta is the Artistic Director of Nava Nritya Dance Academy*

### **Malladi Brothers Concert Review by Revathi Subramony**

The Malladi brothers, Sri Sreeramprasad and Sri Ravikumar, performed for Sruti on May 11, 2013 at the Hindu Temple of Delaware. They were accompanied on the violin by Sri R.K. Sriramkumar and on the mridangam by Sri Tumkur Ravishankar.

The Malladi brothers have given many memorable concerts for Sruti, and I was looking forward to hearing them again! There was some skepticism about this particular concert as we had heard that the first half of the concert would feature only Annamacharya compositions. However, the brothers, well known for their concert intelligence, adhered to a traditional kutcheri format while at the same time giving prominence to Sri Annamacharya, making for a very satisfying concert.

They began their concert with a shloka to pay homage to their guru, Dr. Pinakapani, and went on to present the varnam Sarasuda Ninne Kori in Saveri. They set the mood of the concert with “Sharanam Pitade” in Nattai, a composition of Sri Annamacharya. The brothers rendered the krithi beautifully with a brisk round of swarams. Thyagaraja’s Rama Bhakti Samrajyam in Shuddha Bangala was followed by a short appealing Begada alapana by Sri Ravikumar. R.K. Sriramkumar’s Begada alapana was smooth and impressive. Va Va Muruga, a krithi composed by Sri Spencer Venugopal, a contemporary composer, was a real treat, embellished with a good round of swarams.

Sri Sreeramprasad elaborated a heavenly Poorvikalyani alapana as the main ragam of the concert. His pleasant voice, impeccable shruti, and manodharmam were noteworthy. They presented “Rama mindivara shyamam”, a beautiful Annamacharya composition, along with nereval

and swaram in the pallavi line “Rama mindivara shyamam parathpara dhamam sura sarva bhowmam bhajeham”. While compositions of the Trinity lend themselves to nereval in a very intuitive way, this composition of Sri Annamacharya did not have the same potential for nereval, yet the brothers were able to execute a very meaningful nereval with good bhavam. The swaraprastharam between the brothers and R.K. Sriramkumar was engaging, with koraippu ending in variations of DSRG. They built up to a long korvai, which drew a resounding applause (and whistles!) from the audience.

The Malladi brothers presented krithis in many beautiful ragas like Jayantasena, Madhavamanohari, and Ked-aragowla. In particular, Thyagaraja’s Nannu Vidachi in Reethigowla was very moving.

The evening’s RTP was in Charukeshi. Sri Ravikumar sang a mellifluous alapana. His improvisation displayed many Hindustani touches. R.K. Sriramkumar played an impressive traditional Charukesi ragam, true to the classicism he represents. The tanam was lively with able accompaniment from Tumkur Ravishankar. The pallavi, “Maheshwari mahakali mahalakshmi mahasaraswathi pahimam jagadambike”, set to Misra Jathi Triputa talam, culminated in ragamalika swarams in pleasing ragas like Sahana, Arabhi, Shivananjani, and Karnataka Devagandhari. Sri Tumkur Ravishankar played a crisp thani avarthanam with a good blend of sarvalaghu and intricate laya patterns.

The RTP was followed by a series of thukudas, which made it a rather long concert. Narayana Theertha’s Jaya Jaya Durga in ragam Durga (tuned by Malladi Suri Babu) was enchanting. The brothers presented a note-like composition of Ganapathi Sachchidananda Swamiji, Tripureem Sundareem in Kharaharapriya, in a brisk, rhythmic fashion. They concluded their concert with a Lalgudi tillana in Rageshri.

The Malladi brothers possess a variety of musical talents – vibrant voices, crystal-clear diction, wonderful soukhyam, and a great ability to connect with the audience – a perfect recipe for a successful and satisfying concert!

*Revathi Subramony is a Carnatic vocalist and music enthusiast and lives in Exton, Pennsylvania.*

### **Mandolin U.Srinivas Concert review by Sumanth Swaminathan**

Mandolin U. Srinivas is among a handful of Carnatic Classical Musicians who I keep on a “life stopper” list; as in, there is no life event that can’t be stopped if such action affords the opportunity to see him perform.

Srinivas’s June 1st duet performance with U. Rajesh accompanied by Madirimangalam Swaminathan on mri-

*(Continued on Page 10)*



www.sruti.org

# Sruti

The India Music  
& Dance Society,  
Philadelphia

Saturday  
September 7 2013

Presents

## Composers Day

Main Vocal Concert by

**Roopa Mahadevan**

accompanied by

Arun Ramamurthy (Violin) and  
Rajna Swaminathan (Mridangam)



**10 AM to 4:30 PM, Saturday September 7 2013**

*Science Center Auditorium, Montgomery County Community College, Blue Bell PA 19422*

**Tickets: \$25 (Non-Members), \$20 (Members), \$15 (Students/Seniors),  
\$5 (Children 4 to 18 years old), Free (Children under 4)  
Free Admission for Sponsors**

### PROGRAM

10 AM	Individual and Group Singing (Registration opens August 18)
12 Noon	Lunch Break
1:00 PM	Vocal Recital by Ms. Roopa Mahadevan
3:15 PM	Group Dance Recital by students of Ms. Anita Ranjani and Smt. Vyjayanti Kaustuban respectively

**Tickets: [sruti.tix.com](http://sruti.tix.com) More details at [www.sruti.org](http://www.sruti.org)  
E-mail [srutiphila@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphila@gmail.com) to join Sruti mailing list**





www.sruti.org

# Sruti

The India Music  
& Dance Society,  
Philadelphia

## September 28 2013

### Shujaat Khan Hindustani Classical Sitar Recital

Sruti proudly co-presents with The Annenberg  
Center for the Performing Arts



### Shujaat Khan

In a Grand Hindustani Classical Sitar recital  
accompanied by

### Abhimaan Kaushal on the Tabla

## Saturday September 28, 2013 at 8:00 PM

Zellerbach Theatre at the Annenberg Center,

The University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Price varies from \$20 to \$55 based on seating preference

Phone: Sruti at 267-797-7006 for details or

Annenberg Center Box Office at (215) 898-3900 for tickets

Details and tickets also at [www.sruti.org](http://www.sruti.org) or  
<http://www.annenbergcenter.org/tickets/?id=226>

*This program is supported in part by the Knight Arts Challenge,  
an initiative of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation*

KNIGHT **ARTS** CHALLENGE  
PHILADELPHIA

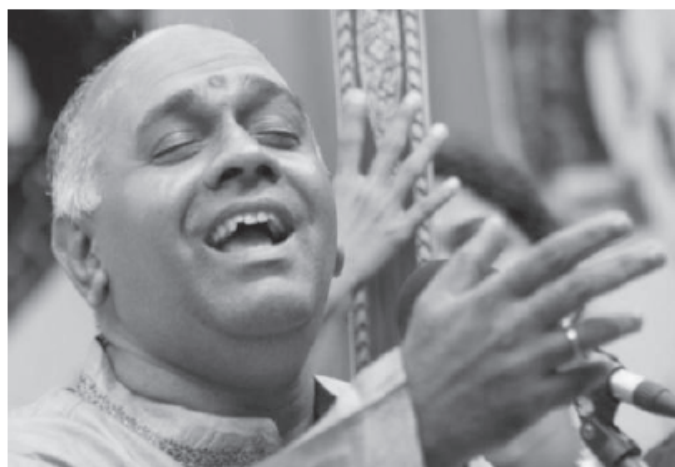


# Sruti

The India Music  
& Dance Society,  
Philadelphia

[www.sruti.org](http://www.sruti.org)

**Sruti proudly presents**



**Vijay Siva**

**in a Grand Carnatic Indian Classical Vocal Recital**

*accompanied by*

**R.K. Sriramkumar on the Violin and  
J.Vaidyanathan on the Mridangam**

**Saturday October 26, 2013 at 4:30 PM**

West Wike Theater, Agnes Irwin School

275 S. Ithan Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Admission: \$25 (Non-Members), \$20 (Members), \$15 (Students/Seniors),  
\$5 (Children 4 to 18 years old), Free (Children under 4)

Tickets at [Sruti.Tix.Com](http://Sruti.Tix.Com) - Details at [www.sruti.org](http://www.sruti.org) or  
Call 267-797-7006 or E-Mail [srutiphila@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphila@gmail.com)





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# Sruti

The India Music  
& Dance Society,  
Philadelphia

November 16 2013

**Kuchipudi Dance Ballet**

Delaware Hindu Temple—2:30 PM Start

**Sruti proudly presents**  
**Sri Krishna Parijatham**  
**A Kuchipudi Dance Ballet**

Performed By  
**Sasikala Penumarthi**  
**Kamala Reddy**  
**Revathi Komanduri and**  
**Shoba Natarajan**  
As a Tribute to Padma Bhushan  
**Dr Vempati Chinna Satyam**

Sri Krishna Parijatham is a Kuchipudi dance drama by Dr Vempati Chinna Satyam. It is a portrayal of very human feelings of unrest and envy, a conflict and resolution. It is a story that reiterates that devotion overpowers dominance to covet the Lord's heart.



**Saturday November 16, 2013 at 2:30 PM**

**Hindu Temple of Delaware**

**760 Yorklyn Road, Hockessin DE**

Admission: \$25 (Non-Members), \$20 (Members), \$15 (Students/Seniors),  
\$5 (Children 4 to 18 years old), Free (Children under 4)

**Tickets at [Sruti.Tix.Com](http://Sruti.Tix.Com) - Details at [www.sruti.org](http://www.sruti.org)**

**Call 267-797-7006 or E-Mail [srutiphila@gmail.com](mailto:srutiphila@gmail.com)**

(Continued from page 5)

dangam and Trichy K. Murali on Ghatam reflected the prowess of a once child prodigy now 40 year veteran of Carnatic Classical music. The troupe delivered a memorable blend of popular krithis, diverse ragas, and interesting thalams, and the musicians maintained the professionalism and artistic sensibility of world class artists.

The concert opened in a very traditional format with the Vasanta ragam Varnam Ninnekor followed by an invocation of Lord Ganapathy from Muthuswami Dikshitar's classic, Vathapi Ganapathim in the raga Hamsadhwani. The ensemble's treatment of Vathapi was very much an instrumental rendition with highly rhythmic sangathees intertwined with lyrical content particularly in the Charanam. Srinivas and Rajesh further presented a short kalpana swaram following the composition.

The troupe spent the next portion of the concert exploring familiar melodies of saint Thyagaraja. The first selection was the famous Pancharatna Krithi, Saadinchane in the ragam Arabhi; this was followed by Maraveri Ramani in Nasikabushani, Tisra Nadai thalam and Enthamuddo in Bindumalini, Adi thalam. The krithis gave the audience a nice blend of ragas and familiar tunes while also affording the artists an opportunity to warm up for the main pieces of the kutcheri.

The major substance of the concert in both a technical and aesthetic sense began with Thyagaraja's Kaligiyunte in the ragam Keeravani. To my personal delight, Srinivas chose Keeravani for the main piece. In a classical duet fashion, the two mandolin maestros took turns in the alapana moving up the scale and developing the raga. Each musician displayed his technical prowess at the top of the scale with a call and answer section replete with brigas and patterned improvisations. Sreenivas concluded the alapana delivering what I believe to be one of the most thoughtful and creatively structured instrumental renderings of Keeravani that I have personally heard.

The musicians played the krithi in a deliberately slow fashion elaborating most on the charanam with both nereval and kalpana swaram. The structure of the swaram section both in the introductory calculations as well as the korapu was in keeping with mandolin's historic virtuoso style. Though the Ragam Thanam Pallavi (RTP) was yet to be delivered, the Pakka Vadyam (percussion accompaniment) chose to do the Thani Avarthanam (percussion solo) following Keeravani with all of the collaborative sections ending three beats after the summum (consistent with the lyrics of the charanam). The audience was highly engaged in the percussion solos and very appreciative of the accompanists' precision, virtuosity, and creativity.

The RTP took a highly nontraditional form which I have personally not witnessed in previous kutcheris. The pallavi itself consisted of four avarthanams (rhythmic cycles) of Misra Chapu thalam, three of which were in different ragams (Lathangi, Revathi, and Siva Rajani). Generally, this format is not used in Carnatic classical music though it is common to key changes in a variety of western classical, jazz, and pop formats. In keeping with this pallavi, the artists rotated around the three ragams during their respective ragam and thanam solos. Similarly, the ragamalika following the pallavi consisted of an elaboration on the three ragams. Personally, I have never been a listener or performer who places an emphasis on traditionalism before creativity, so I found Srinivas's presentation to be both fascinating and enjoyable.

The concert concluded with a series of short pieces. The highlights for the listeners included JagadoDarana in Kapi ragam, the famous ragamalika, Theerada Vilayatu Pillai in Kanda Nadai thalam, and in a tribute to the late Lalgudi Jayaraman, whose passing this year left a deep void in the Carnatic Classical realm, the artists played Lalgudi's Thillana in Brindavana Saranga.

As a long time lover of music, I must confess that I will always maintain an analytical mind set when listening to live concerts. For me, dissecting the artistic choices and musical nuances inherent in a performance is a fundamental part of the experience. There is, however, a long standing and far simpler metric for evaluating the quality of an artist's performance. Once need only ask one self if he or she would attend another concert by the same artist. For me, the decision is quite clear; U. Srinivas will continue to maintain his hardened status on my "Life Stopper" list.

*Sumanth Swaminathan is a Carnatic saxophone artist who studied under the legendary Dr. Kadri Gopalnath. He is a recording artist, performer, and teacher who resides in the greater Philadelphia area.*

**Kunnakudi M. Balamurali Krishna Concert  
Review by Lata Suresh**

Sruti hosted the vocal concert of Kunnakudi Balamurali Krishna (KBK) at Agnes Irwin School on April 27, 2013. He was accompanied on the violin by B. U. Ganesh Prasad and on the mridangam by K. Murugaboopathi.

The concert opened with Sri Lalgudi G. Jayaraman's BahudhAri Varnam *Ento prematonu nine*. There was a constant effort to overcome audio (strained voice and mic) adjustment. Subsequently a good tone and gait was set for the rest of the concert. Next item to follow was *MahAganapathim ManasA SmarAmi* in Chala nAttai by Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar. This item added briskness to the initial part of the event. KBK then rendered Sri SwAthi ThirunAl's *Mamava sadhA Janani* in KAnadA after a short and crisp raga essay. Then came the smooth-flowing NeelAmbari - Misra ChApu in slow-tempo in the form of *Neeke DhayarAdhA of Saint Tyagaraja*. Following this was *Kanden kanden kanden Seethaiyai* from Kamba Ramanayam in Vasantha. KBK the unfolded Kalyani ragam to the audience followed by Dikshithar's *KamalAmbam Bhajare*. The Hindolam (Main Ragam) RTP (*Manam Kollai konda Kanna—an excerpt from Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman's Lyrics*) was indeed the highlight of the evening. The leisurely swara interludes in MAndu and Madhuvanathi added rich color to the item. Then came Sri Lalgudi G. Jayaraman's Thillana in Pahadi followed by Arunagirinathar's *Erumayileri vilayadum mugam (Thirupugazh)* concluding with the Mangalam (Saurashtram).

Throughout the concert KBK exhibited his prowess in the talam department. Ganesh Prasad and Murugaboopathi provided ample support and matching performance from their ends. His performance exhibited mastery of the art form. It will certainly leave a lasting impression in the Rasikas' minds as he strives to balance technique and *bhavam* to bring more *jeevan* in his rendition.

**Lata Suresh is a Carnatic Vocal artiste in the Philadelphia Area. She runs her own music school 'Sangeethalaya' in West Chester PA.**

#### **June 15<sup>th</sup>**

Kuchipudi Ranga Pravesam—Anita Kilambi—Guru: Sunanda Gandham (Nataraja Performing Arts) - Goodhart Theater, Bryn Mawr College  
101 N Merion Ave, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

#### **June 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Mridangam Arangetram—Gautam Nagaraj—Guru Dr. P. Sivakumar (Hamsanadham School of Music) - Great Valley High School  
225 N. Phoenixville Pike, Malvern, PA 19355.

Kuchipudi Ranga Pravesam—Neha Nataraj—Guru: Viji Rao (Three Aksha Dance Institute) - Plymouth Whitmarsh High School  
201 East Germantown Pike, Plymouth Meeting PA 19462.

Bharatanatyam Arangetram—Shwetha Sudhakar—Guru: Ramaa Ramesh (Nardhana Academy of Dance) - Conestoga High School Auditorium, 200 Irish Rd, Berwyn, PA 19312.

*Congratulations to all the budding artistes!*

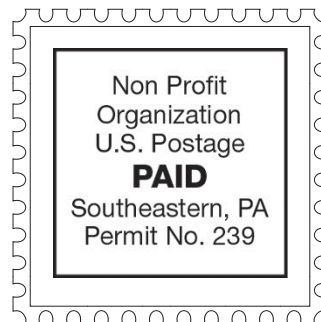




**Sruti**  
The India Music  
& Dance Society,  
Philadelphia

www.sruti.org

1706 Osprey Drive,  
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**Calendar of Events**  
**Fall 2013\***

**September 7<sup>th</sup>**

Composers Day 10:00 am at the *Montgomery County Community College*

**September 28<sup>th</sup>**

Classical Hindustani Sitar concert by Shujaat Khan accompanied by Abhiman Kaushal on the Tabla 7:30pm at the Zellerbach Theatre, Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, University of Pennsylvania

**October 26<sup>th</sup>**

Carnatic Vocal Concert by Vijay Siva accompanied by R.K.Shriramkumar on the violin and J.Vaidyanathan on the mridangam, 4:30 pm at the *Agnes Irwin school's West-Wike Theater in Rosemont, PA*

**November 16<sup>th</sup>**

Kuchipudi Dance Ballet by Shoba Natarajan, Sasikala Penumarthy, Kamala Reddy, Revathi Komanduri as a tribute to Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam, 2:30 pm at the *Hindu Temple of Delaware*

**December 7<sup>th</sup>**

Sruti Day - General Body meeting, Election of 2014 Sruti Board of Directors, at Bharatiya Hindu Temple, 1612 County Line Road, Chalfont, PA 18914.

\* Programs and artists are subject to change.