
SRUTI RANJANI 2010



A publication of
SRUTI- The India Music and Dance Society
Philadelphia, PA

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SRUTI- The India Music and Dance Society is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in the Philadelphia area and founded in 1986. Sruti's principal mission is to promote and present Indian classical music and dance. In addition Sruti also seeks to educate the Philadelphia community at large about Indian arts. Sruti is a volunteer-run organization. Its leadership comprises of an elected Board of Directors and several committees. Sruti publishes an annual magazine Sruti Ranjani and a periodical, Sruti Notes.

During the past twenty four years, SRUTI has grown from presenting three to four concerts a year to presenting eight to ten concerts a year. All this has been made possible with recognition and funding from many granting agencies and corporations in addition to a loyal and appreciative audience. SRUTI has received generous grants from private foundations and public organizations including the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Philadelphia Foundation, Dance Advance and Philadelphia Music Project (funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts), the Stockton-Rush Bartol Foundation, Sam Fels Foundation and the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News

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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.

From the President's pen:

Dear Indian Classical Music and Dance enthusiasts:

It has been a momentous year for Sruti with lot of buzz and excitement being generated about our organization in many circles. Sruti 2010 Board of Directors and the various committees have done stupendous amount of work to gain traction and momentum in pushing Sruti 'experience' to new heights for its patrons and members. We had virtuoso performances through the dance recitals of Nrityagram, Godavari and Shijith Nambiar & Parvathi Menon providing us all a beautiful visual treat. This was complemented with mesmerizing instrumental programs of Dr.L.Subramaniam and Nirmala Rajasekhar. The vocal concerts of Salem Sriram, Unnikrishnan, Vijay Siva, Veena Shasrabuddhe and the Malladi brothers were all out of this world and gave great pleasure to all of us. We squeezed in a lecture/demo in memory of D.K Pattammal by Kiranavali Vidyasankar, a chamber concert of rising young talent Sri Ranjani in July and a workshop by Veena and Hari Shasrabuddhe on Hindustani music fundamentals that was well structured and informative. Aradhana at the beginning of the year and the Sruti Day finale show the burgeoning talent in our community that will sustain Indian Classical Music and Dance for the future generations.

This was a year when the economy was slowly recovering putting a lot of stress on our granting agencies. The Resource Committee tried every innovative means at their disposal to bring funds into the organization. We got grants for Sam Fels and PCAH that reduced the burden on our financials. The company matching funds through the contributions of our core members, Sruti Capital One card initiative and the advertisements from our sponsors reduced the deficit considerably for Sruti.

The treasurer's job in any organization is a thankless one with the responsibility of ensuring that the accounting and the budgets are in line with the organization's ambitions. Added to that ensuring the filing of federal taxes and state related forms to maintain our non-profit status is no small task. In spite of the myriad financial challenges this year we managed to reduce our losses considerably and still keep us on a sound footing for next year.

The story of this year is our advent into aggressive marketing campaigns to bring in more audiences and broaden Sruti's reach. We tried every means at our disposal to bring in innovative ideas to grow our audience. We took the help of consultants from PMP and others who could advise us on such matters. We collaborated with Montgomery County Community College, Drexel University's Pragathi, Philly Fringe, Bryn Mawr College's South Asian Woman's organization, Bharatiya Cultural Center, Ganesh festival committee and the Delaware Temple to alleviate our budgets and bring in new audiences to Sruti.

The new web design that was produced by the publications and marketing committees brought on a total new look and feel to our organization. Sruti's entry into facebook in 2009 has taken off and is creating a buzz of its own and taking us into totally new places that only social network media can. Our innovative marketing ideas of providing incentives to attend concerts through Princeton radio and online ticketing promotions through tix.com to name a few brought large dividends. With all this going on we still needed to do the everyday marketing of posters, banners, e-mails and personal one on one selling to increase our audiences. The survey results and increased audiences bear testimony to this amazing amount of work that was accomplished through the year.

The publications committee besides working on keeping the web sites up to date as well producing the Sruti notes had to contend with all the print requirements of marketing material and program notes. The new Sruti web design took a lot of work to design and populate and this was done at a rapid pace to introduce the new Sruti web site for the start of the fall season. The web design and site has received some wonderful feedback from our members and sponsor organizations.

This year we introduced a new function to provide 'member services' and focus on how we can improve the 'Sruti' experience for all. Evite was used as a means of confirming attendees and ensuring that all the intended benefits were delivered to our core members. We ensured that a special General Body meeting was held to complete the by-laws modifications that were under discussion for a couple of years. The new by-laws can be found on our web site with special thanks to the by-law committee of Ramana Kanumalla, Paul Narayanan, and Dinakar Subramanian. Vidyasankar, President for 2009, presided over the meeting and helped to compile the amendments together.

This year we have encouraged our Sruti youth to take a lot more interest in participating in the running of events. They have risen to the challenge and have ignited the youth in Sruti to take part and actively participate. The youth committee has helped in the running of events and their marquee achievement was interviewing the artistes and Sruti members. The artistes have all echoed the fact that Sruti initiative in this area was something they would like others to emulate. The interview preparation and production along with posting on YouTube with the artists' written permissions has shown that the youth can produce quality deliverables. It is this Board's ardent desire that Sruti members encourage the youngsters to keep this alive and continue to reach greater heights.

If all this was not enough, this board had to deal with the important function of planning for the 25th year. President-elect, Uma, took on this task with great zest and enthusiasm. The BOD took input from past presidents and Sruti members to format the 25th year celebrations in a series of meetings and one on one dialogs. The program for next year has taken shape very well with final touches to be put in place by the new BOD for 2011. The 25th anniversary celebration is shaping to be an excellent ensemble of vocalists, instrumentalists and dance groups. The Sruti community is also being tapped to accompany these programs through a series of mini concerts, panel discussions and workshops.

This body of work would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment to excellence of our Sruti BOD, committees and the spouses of the BOD. The volume of work that is involved in any of the committees to push forward Sruti's agenda has grown exponentially and could tax even the hardest and dedicated worker. So with great pride and sense of job well done I would like to recognize each and every member for their contributions to growing Sruti and its reach in the PA, NJ and DE areas. It is no wonder that we are recognized as a premier organization that represents the best of Indian Classical Dance and Music.

I would be remiss if I did not thank all the spouses of our Board and committee members. They have put in their personal time and did whatever was asked of them without any complaint and with a smile on their faces. Lastly, I would like to thank all Sruti members, music and dance enthusiasts who continue to support Sruti by coming in large numbers to our concerts. This year saw a record number of new attendees and is a testament to the energy we put in our marketing and outreach.

On a personal note it has been my privilege to serve Sruti and its members in various capacities over the years. Along the way I have made many friends and enjoyed each and everyone's warm regard and support which has motivated me to do my very best for Sruti.

Thank you and wish everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Venkat Kilambi on behalf of the Sruti BOD

From the Publications and Outreach Committee:

Dear Friends,

SRUTI RANJANI 2010 is the final publication of the year as the events draw to a close with Sruti Day, December 11, 2010. We take this opportunity to thank all that have contributed to this publication.

Included in this edition of SRUTI RANJANI is a center spread of photographs of events through the year. They provide a visual chronicle of SRUTI events and peripheral activities. 2010 witnessed some notable concerts. The Philadelphia area is endowed with a large and vibrant arts community. We hope to continue to further the appreciation for Indian classical music and dance in the Greater Philadelphia Region.

Please consider writing for the publications in 2011- The Thyagaraja Aradhana Souvenir, Sruti Notes and Sruti Ranjani 2011. It is not possible to put together the publications without your contribution. We welcome your thoughts and ideas.

We wish you all a wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Sundari Balakrishnan (balusundari@yahoo.com)

Rungun Nathan (rungun.nathan@psu.edu)

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December 2010

Fondly remembering 24 years with Sruti

Prabhakar Chitrapu & Uma Prabhakar

It has been almost a quarter century since our association with Sruti!! It seems like it was only the other evening. In a friend's house. A dinner. People were lamenting over the observation that Carnatic musicians came to New York or DC or Pittsburgh – and went past Philadelphia. They had no reason to stop here and we were the ones to lose out. We have to start an organization, something to attract Indian classical musicians and dancers to the Philadelphia area to perform. What would we call it? Several names were being suggested. Someone said they had been thinking of the name Sruti. Why Sruti? Doesn't it mean "that which is heard", as opposed to Smruti, "that which is remembered"? As in our scriptures? That was how much I_pⁱ knew about the seven notes of our classical music! Soon the better knowing people prevailed and the name Sruti survived! Then there was the one-liner that followed the title: "The India Music and Dance Society". It sounded weird! Shouldn't it be "The Indian Music & Dance Society"? The seriousness and knowledge the other founders of the organization had about Indian classical arts, was intimidating, yet funny and cute! We were also younger then and had weaker voices – and unfortunately, in our opinion, the lesser knowing people prevailed in this situation and we are stuck with a potentially grammatically incorrect headline!

I_uⁱⁱ had recently moved to the US and one of our close friends somehow got me involved in the very first Managing Committee of Sruti as the Secretary (it was later that the concept of a Board was instituted for Sruti). I had absolutely no idea of what I was getting into, and that's how it all started. Now, after 24 years, we and our family have become an integral part of this wonderful organization and we look lovingly at Sruti as she has grown and matured and along with that helped us grow and appreciate Indian classical music and dance, enriched our lives and, shaped our personalities into what we have become today. We recollect here some fond memories of the early days and reflect on some specific experiences.

September 14, 1986, was an auspicious day in the life of SRUTI - Dr. ML Vasanthakumari graced the organization with her majestic presence and delighted the audience with her melodious voice and spellbinding concert. Until that day, we had only seen MLV on the dust jackets of LP's, CDs and in the press. I_u had the pleasure and honor to ride in the car with her to the auditorium; she was an imposing personality, yet simple and unassuming. I remember her asking for toast and butter and I sheepishly took a plate of the food to her room!

Many memorable events followed this auspicious beginning and they made up the quarter century of Sruti's being and touched the lives of many people, including us. Vivid memories flash across our minds with images of concerts such as those by Balamuralikrishna, TN Seshagopalan, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, Hyderabad Brothers, TM Krishna, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Sudha Raghunathan, Yesudas, Ramani, Lalgudi Jayaraman, MS Gopalakrishnan, Mandolin Srinivas, Ravikiran, Bhimsen Joshi, Hariprasad Chaurasia, Ravi Shankar and Anoushka Shankar, on and on. Just one such memory is this. It was a much anticipated concert by Nedunuri Krishnamurthy. The date was May 5 – special because it was the birth anniversary of Saint Thyagaraja. Someone had mentioned this to Nedunuri garu and obviously, he had made a mental note of it. As the concert progressed, the main piece arrived, which was an elaborate alapana in Raga Bilahari. At its end, Nedunuri announced the special day it was and started the famous kriti "Dorakuna Ituvanti Seva" by Thyagaraja – roughly meaning "(only the fortunate) can one obtain such an opportunity". We are sure many others, among us rasikas, will have such fond and cherished memories as well.

However, being part of the Sruti organization, brings many additional and rare opportunities to meet with the artists, host them and drive them places. These are most unique opportunities when personal bonds are built with the artists and when we imbibe inspiration, awe and learning from interactions with them. We get to know and experience episodes that no money can buy. To this we are grateful to Sruti and would like to share part of the immense wealth that we experienced during these years of serving Sruti.

Hosting artists perhaps gives the best opportunity to know and learn from the artists. One such occasion that is imprinted in our memory is Dr. Balamuralikrishna's (BMK) stay with us in 1990. I_u was expecting our first child and was extremely excited when it was decided that we were hosting BMK and his troupe at our house. They arrived the evening before the concert, BMK in his white jhubba and dhoti. He stood at our doorstep and announced in his mighty and resonant voice, 'Balamurali has come to your house!' The house was so festive with his presence. He joked and he munched away vadas as I was frying them for our lunch. It was also awesome to

hear him hum and sing bits and pieces of songs for us - every note emanating from his lips seemed like a full fledged concert in itself.

As the evening settled, learned discussions about music commenced in the family room. One of the topics touched upon was Swara Sahityam – how lyrics and notes coincided. For example, whenever sa or pa appeared in the sahityam, the corresponding notes would also be sa or pa respectively. Obviously, Balamurali was thinking more about it and teased us to expect a surprise in the concert! It turned out to be the most extra ordinary composition exhibiting an extreme form of swara sahityam, in which every sahitya-syllable matched the sangeeta-note! The composition was his own and in Raga Thodi. The Pallavi was “Maa Maanini, Nida Magani, Ni Daasarini, Gaada”. And the notes were: “Ma-Ma-Ni-Ni, Ni-Da Ma-Ga-Ni, Ni-Da-Sa-Ri-Ni, Ga-Da” – all identical to the sahityam! That was indeed a surprise and I doubt that there is another composition like that in Carnatic music literature.

Some years later, Sruti had organized Balamuralikrishna’s concert again and we were having dinner with him after the event in our friend and host’s home. Intense discussions were in progress and the topic was that of “Rama, the Man/God” and “Rama, the Name/Mantra”. Balamurali told us that while he questioned several aspects of the story of Rama, the name Rama was powerful as a Mantra. He explained how the two syllables Ra and Ma were central to the Narayana Mantra and Namasiva Mantra respectively. Without these key syllables, the Mantras would become Na-ayana and Na-Siva – basically negations of Vishnu and Siva!

Sudha Raghunathan, is another artist that we admire dearly for her voice, scholarship, her vidvath and her accomplishments. During one of her stays with us, my (Uma’s) mother was visiting us. As Sudha headed out to the car to drive to her concert, she quickly reached out to my mother, touched her feet to seek her blessings before her performance. My mother was so moved by this gesture of humility and reverence for the elderly.

A very cute episode that comes to mind is the stay of Sowmya with her little son who was about 5-6 years old at that time. As we headed to the concert hall, he spotted a fox from the car and remarked to his mother, '*amma, there is a kutti fox*'. Also as Sowmya drifted into her concert performance, she would lovingly look at her son as he sat in a front row seat listening to her music. Soon he fell asleep and put his head down on his own lap - a sight so cute and touching. Sowmya continued to sing away..

Then there were occasions, when we hosted Neyveli Santhanagopalan in our Princeton home. We were not aware that he did not speak on the day of the concert so as to conserve his voice. We insisted he eat more idlis or whatever else we had for lunch and since he was doing the 'maunavrata' he was unable to say no. After the concert, he did comment that he was so full from lunch he was afraid he would not be able to sing that day! Another very enjoyable recollection is Nirmala Rajashekhar and the ensemble's stay with us. They were such a fun loving group and we had extremely profound non-music related discussions late into the night after the concert. It was 3:00 AM by the time we all slept and they had to wake up early next morning to catch a 7:00 AM flight.

Sometimes, hosting artists had other benefits too! We had the pleasure of hosting Sri Adyar Lakshman in April 1999 when he and his troupe presented 'Abhyaasa'. I had always thought that dance, while primarily being an art form, also did much good for the physical body in keeping it well exercised. On the other hand, aerobic and other exercises meant for the good of the body were hardly aesthetic at all! Would it not be nice if a dance teacher would come up with an exercise regimen based on elementary postures and movements from Bharathanatyam or a similar art form? One could then maintain a good physique as well as grace in standing, sitting and moving! We shared these thoughts with Sri Lakshman Sir, who being the stately personality that he is, gave it a thought and even taught us some Bharatanatyam based exercises to help us tone!

Apart from hosting the artists, perhaps the other unforgettable times would be the car rides, when we would bring the artists from the airport or to the concert hall or to the place of their next event. It was at such times, when we would share undistracted times with the artists, when they were relaxed and in an easy frame of mind. Their pretences and defenses were often down and it would make for enchanting times of very personal exchanges.

One such memory that will never fade is when I was driving Sanjay Subrahmanyam, RK Shriramkumar and others to New Jersey after their concert. We were all in a minivan and it was raining rather heavily throughout the way. The discussions were centered around Thyagaraja and his compositions, and Sanjay and Shriramkumar would sing the Pallavis to illustrate a point or two and making the drive a most unforgettable experience of a

private informal concert after the main concert! Another such occasion was when Sudha Raghunathan was kind enough to sing Rara Maa Intidaka in a drive home, when I pestered her about my favorite raga Asaveri! It was a dream come true indeed. Quite different though was the other drive when I had to speed at near 90 mph sometimes to get her to Washington DC temple to be in time for her concert there! She was unperturbed in the backseat and probably thinking about the concert as I sweated at the wheel in the driver's seat. Yet another time, I was driving Balamuralikrishna home. I used to hear a lot of Carnatic music in the car at that time and it turned out that I had Balamurali's cassette in car. It started playing as soon as I started the car and felt somewhat sheepish, not knowing how he would react! Balamurali suggested I keep it on as he listened to his own singing. One song finished and the next started – minus the alapana! I had deliberately cut off all the alapanas in that cassette to better suit my listening style and felt stupid about what Balamurali would think. He was so gracious in tolerating my immaturity in music appreciation and even said something to support my view. At another time, I was bringing the violin and mridanga vidwans from New Jersey. I had Nedunuri and Lalgudi's cassette playing in the car, and we listened heartily to the Thodi kriti Sri Krishnam by Dikshitar. We were discussing about Lalgudi's accompaniment and how magnificent it was. I used to think in those days that alapanas by the vocalist followed by the violinist seemed like a repetition (or a close repetition) of the same music and used to wonder how it would be if the kriti started with the violinist playing the alapana, followed by the vocalist singing the kriti followed by swara kalpana, in which both of them play equal roles. Wouldn't that be an equitable performance between two equally qualified musicians? I dared to share this idea with them (perhaps since the vocalist was not with us!). They mused at the idea and remarked that while it may be worth trying in principle, it will never happen in the current state of artists' egos and perceptions!

SRUTI has not only helped us develop a deeper appreciation of classical music and dance, but it has given us glimpses of the stalwart artists as real people in non-concert settings and helped us develop bonds and friendships with so many of them. We owe our gratitude and thanks to SRUTI and we hope this association with the organization and artists will continue for our lifetime.

¹ I_p denoting Prabhakar

¹ I_u denoting Uma

Prabhakar Chitrapu is a communications engineer. He is deeply interested Indian Philosophy and Indian Classical Music and maintains a website: www.Thyagaraja.org. He has served on the Sruti Board in various capacities for several years.

Uma Prabhakar is a research scientist in Life Sciences and has been closely associated with Sruti since its inception in 1986. Her interests include music, writing and, cooking.

We appreciate your Membership / Support

SRUTI

THE INDIA MUSIC AND DANCE SOCIETY

PROUDLY PRESENTS

GRAND MUSIC CONCERT


BY

DR. M.L.VASANTHAKUMARI

ACCOMPANIED BY

KUMARI KANYAKUMARI - VIOLIN

SRI. RAMNAD RAGHAVAN- MRIDANGAM



DATE: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 14, 1986 TIME: 3:30 P.M.

PLACE: CONGREGATION BETH-EL,

715 PAXON HOLLOW ROAD, BROOMALL, PA. 19008

(215)-356-8700

(DIRECTIONS ON BACK)

ADMISSION: MEMBERS: FAMILY \$ 12, SINGLE \$ 6, STUDENTS \$ 4
NON MEMBERS: FAMILY \$ 15, SINGLE \$ 8, STUDENTS \$ 5

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

INDIRA RAJAN (215) 698-2064	K. RAMAKRISHNAN (302)-475-6961	USHA SITARAM (215)-352-9032	M.M. SUBRAMANIAM (215)-356-5181	T.S. VENKATARAMAN (215)-328-6396
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ARTISTS:

Dr. M.L.Vasanthakumari, popularly known as MLV, has been at the forefront of carnatic music world for over three decades. A leading disciple of the legendary musician, late G.N.BALASUBRAMANIAM (GNB), MLV has established an individual style of singing. Her music is marked by controlled effervescence and spacious imagination. With a large repertoire of PURANDARA DASA's kritis, she has been largely responsible for the popularization of the great savant's compositions.

MLV has received numerous awards including the Padma Bhushan from the Government of India and the coveted SANGITA KALANIDHI from the prestigious Music Academy of Madras.

Kumari Kanyakumari, a disciple of M.Chandrasekharan, is a leading South Indian Violinist. She has accompanied many leading South Indian musicians and also given solo concerts.

Vidwan Ramnad Raghavan teaches mridangam at the Cleveland Oberlin College and the Cleveland State College. He has also been teaching mridangam at the S.V.Temple Pittsburgh; and was recently awarded the Asthana Vidwan title at the S.V.Temple.

Vocal support to MLV is provided by Smt. Meena Subramaniam, who has traveled extensively to many countries with MLV.

DIRECTIONS TO CONGREGATION BETH-EL PAXON HOLLOW ROAD BROOMALL PA.:

- 1.Traveling South on PA.Rte 320 (Sprout Road) drive about 1.5 miles after intersection with PA Rte 3, to Paxon Hollow Road. Turn right on Paxon Hollow Road. Congregation Beth-El is less than 0.25 mile on your left. Parking is on the rear of the building.
2. Traveling North on PA.Rte 320, drive about 1.5 miles after intersection with Rte. 1, turn left on Paxon Hollow Road immediately after Lawrence Park Shopping Center. Follow directions in (1).
3. Traveling West on PA. Rte 3 (West Chester Pike), turn left on Lawrence Road immediately after Haverford Memorial Hospital (to your left) and Pathmark is to your right on Lawrence Road. Lawrence Road ends on Sprout Road (PA. Rte 320) . Turn right on Sprout Road and immediately left on Paxon Hollow Road. Follow directions in (1).
4. Traveling East on PA. Rte 3 (West Chester Pike) turn right on Springfield Road (Bradlees on your right) . Springfield Road joins Sprout Road (PA. Rte 320) . Follow directions in (1).

We look forward to seeing you at the concert. Thanks.

Intellectual Achievements in Indian Art Music

A.Seshan

Music, in general, is categorised into different types: art music, folk music, light music, etc. Whether it is Indian or foreign music sruti and layam are common characteristics of all systems. The difference is in the cultural, intellectual and emotional approaches. By and large, traditionally Indian music has been highly oriented towards devotion to gods and goddesses. However, there are also genres that are secular and some are meant to be sung on specific occasions like weddings, harvest season, etc. Although all require expertise, art music, or what is known as classical music, calls for greater intellectual appreciation than the rest because of the relatively complex grammar. This article describes the intellectual content of Carnatic music. The title, however, refers to Indian art music because till about the 13th century there was only one music system that prevailed in the country and both Carnatic and Hindustani sub-systems are heirs to that heritage. This article covers many features that existed prior to the 13th century. According to some musicologists, the reference to the bifurcation of Indian music into Carnatic and Hindustani systems appears for the first time in *Sangeeta Sudhakaram* written by Haripala early in the 14th century. It was the consequence of foreign invasion and the rule of Islamic kings who encouraged the influence of Arabic and Persian music on India. Carnatic music was spared of this influence and retained the original flavour of the Indian system. The songs from the Bengali saint Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda* of the 12th century have traditionally been sung in Carnatic ragas. The write-up draws on what I have learnt over more than a half century by reading books and articles and listening to lectures besides what I have written based on research. It comes under the category of library research, as the Westerner would call it. I have seen many professional journals in my field publishing articles based on library research (eg. *Journal of Economic Literature*). It is helpful to a student or a scholar in coming to know of all the developments in the field over the years. It is ethical as long as the sources or references are cited. I have done it to the extent possible except where I have depended on memory. The references for sources are too many to cite although, wherever possible, appropriate and recallable, they are given. No originality is claimed for the 'findings' of the study. Another caveat is that the statements on our 'achievements' should not be taken as being in the nature of cultural chauvinism deriding the other systems. Each system has its own unique characteristics, strong and weak, as well as those which it shares with others. I have referred to Western music in this article because of some familiarity with that system. Remember when Bharati said that Tamil was the sweetest language he did not say it with reference to all the languages of the world. He said: "Yaamarinda mozhikalile", i.e., "among the languages I know". It is in that spirit that the statements made in the write-up should be understood by the reader. Comparisons should not deteriorate into determining the superiority of one system over the other as some experts have done in the past. It would be tantamount to comparing the incomparables.

Vaggeyakara

The one outstanding feature of Indian art music is the concept of vaggeyakara, one who conceives the lyric and also sets it to music often simultaneously. 'Vag' is word and 'geya' is music. In the West this combination does not exist in art music though it does in pop music. Thus Mendelssohn composed incidental music for the *Wedding March* of *The Midsummer Night's Dream* of Shakespeare. A vaggeyakara is an architect of both vag (word) and geya (sound or music). He is also known as dhatu-matukara. The term composer, as used in the West, refers to the person who sets the music (sangeet) to the lyric (geet). Although our vaggeyakaras are often called composers it is strictly not correct. In our country there have been several of them through the centuries. That the unique combination of geetkar and sangeetkar is one person in the Indian system is brought out by the fact that there is no equivalent single word in English for vaggeyakara. What is interesting is the inspired nature of their contributions. When Tyagaraja sang a kriti it was a finished product even as it was being conceived in his mind. It was complete with not only sahitya but also raga swarupa, tala, gamakas, sangatis, etc. It was an integrated package. Today we often refer to the kritis of the vaggeyakaras to know the real swarupa of a raga in terms of what note should be used and how and what should be eschewed. In other words, lakshana (grammar) and lakshya (practical music) are intertwined. Tyagaraja was not known to have written down the lyric and set it to music. His disciples learnt the songs by listening to him as he sang and passed them on to the next generation. This oral transmission has had its own merits and demerits unlike in the case of the Western masters whose scores, as written by them, are preserved and available even after centuries. There are no controversies about the intentions of the composer. This is a plus point for the West. One hears of interpolation (idaichcherukal in Tamil) in many kritis, particularly of Tyagaraja – something that one does not come across in the Western system. Tyagaraja's

first draft was his final draft! He or many of his contemporaries and successors never thought of revising the sahitya or the tune.

In India after the commencement of ‘talkies’ till about the 1940s we had vaggeyakaras like Papanasam Sivan who composed both the lyric and the music for Tamil movies also. Perhaps it had something to do with the point that at that time classical music prevailed in films. Now we do not have that system in movies either in Tamil or in other languages. The lyricist is one and the music director is another. Sometimes the lyric is written and given to the music director to tune it. In other instances, the music director comes up with the tune and the lyricist has to match it with words. In such cases often fillers like ‘oh la la’, ‘ha ha’, ‘ho ho’, etc., and nonsensical words are used as a last resort, something you do not find in the classical compositions. As far as I know, the West has never had a combination of lyricist-cum-music director even in movies.

One intellectual innovation of some vaggeyakaras is to include the name of the raga (raga mudra) and his own (vaggeyakara mudra) in the song. Tyagaraja and Syama Sastri’s kritis have only the latter but Dikshitar’s has both. The ingenuity of Dikshitar is in the imaginative manner in which he weaves the name of the raga meaningfully into the sahitya. Take “*Hiranmayim*” in Lalitha. The ragamudra is introduced in the last line of the charanam, viz., “*Pitha vasanam guru guha mathula kantham Lalitham*”. Lalitha is one of the names of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. One intriguing question for me is why Dikshitar did not use raga mudra in any of his Todi kritis.

The Solfa System

We have the saptaswaras, viz., sa ri ga ma pa dha ni. The West has its solfa system, viz., do re mi fa sol la ti, the origin of which is attributed to the Italian Guido of Arezzo of the 11th century. The Indian swaras are traced to the Sama Veda of the pre-Christian era. Raga as a melodic concept is the Indian contribution to world music even as harmony is in the case of Western music. The earliest reference to raga is in Bharata’s Natya Sastra (5th century BCE) where he refers to it as ‘jati’. Scholars have come to the consensus that ‘raga’ appears in literature for the first time in Matanga’s Brihaddesi of the 5th century ACE. The Kudumiyamalai inscriptions in Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu have the swara notations for the first time in the caves. It was the contribution of Mahendra Varman, the Pallava king belonging to the 7th century ACE.

The use of the solfa or swara system in Indian music integrates the notes and the words of the sahitya. One can do swaraprastara using them. More interestingly it leads to certain innovations like swara sahityam and swaraksharam. In the case of the swara sahityam while the anupallavi of a kriti consists of the notes the corresponding version of the sahitya appears in charanam. They are found in the kritis of Syama Sastri and Subbaraya Sastri, among others. The more daring concept is swaraksharam - the matching of swara and the sahitya letter by letter. We have three types of swaraksharam. They are suddha swaraksharam, suchita swaraksharam and suddha-suchita swaraksharam. In the case of suddha swaraksharam there is a straight correspondence between the swara and the letter or syllable. An example is “*Padasaroja*” in the charanam of the Navaraga varnam. The first three syllables are sung to the swaras pa, dha and sa. In suchita swaraksharam the correspondence is between modified letters of the sahitya and the underlying swaras. Syama Sastri’s Saveri kriti starts with “*Durusuga*”. Du, ru and su are the aksharas or syllables that are matched by the underlying dha, ri and sa. (‘ga’ in the sahitya is not in the swarakshara mode.) Suchita is indicative and is a pointer to the underlying note. Incidentally, there is an asamyuta hasta mudra in Bharatanatyam called suchi where the index finger sticks out pointing to something - a person or object with the remaining fingers bending into the palm. Suddha-Suchita swarakshara is a combination of the other two. An example is in the pallavi of “*Sarasaksha*” in Pantuvarali of Swati Tirunal. The first three syllables sa, ra and sa are matched by sa, ri and sa.

The height of intellectual achievement was achieved in a Telugu swarakshara pada varnam, also known as swarasthana varnam, in Todi attributed to Ramaswami Dikshitar, father of Muthuswami Dikshitar. It starts with ‘*sarigaani paamarini ni pada*’. There is swaraksharam throughout! The sahitya consists of meaningful words neatly matching the underlying notes literally. There is no nonsensical word in the sahitya. M Balamuralikrishna, a master musician and vaggeyakara of contemporary times, was perhaps inspired by Dikshitar when he composed a kriti in swaraksharam in Todi starting with “*Maa maanini ni dhaama gani ni daasarini gaadaa*”.

Srutibhedam or Grahabhedam

An achievement not of any individual but the raga system is the concept of Srutibhedam or Grahabhedam. By taking the swaras of a raga and then shifting the adhara sruti or the tonic note to the other swaras one can produce different ragas. Thus the swaras ri, ga, ma, dha and ni of Todi, if treated as shadja results in Kalyani, Harikambhoji, Natabhairavi, Sankarabharanam and Kharaharapriya, respectively. This technique was known to the ancient Tamils several centuries ago and their music literature refers to it as 'kural tiripu'. The Tamil equivalents for the names of the saptaswaras are kural, tuttam, kaikilai, uzhai, ili, vilari and taram. By making another note take the role of kural (the equivalent of shadja) one produces different ragas or pannas, as the Tamils called it. Kural tiripu means the change of the kural or the basic pitch (adhara sruti). The most interesting outcome of this intellectual technique is the one relating to Gopriya, a janya of Rishabhapriya, the 62nd mela. You take any swara in this raga and do Srutibhedam and you arrive at Gopriya! To this writer it is the height of the intellectual achievement of the system. The swaras of this vivadi raga are shadja, chatusruti rishabha, antara gandhar, prati madhyam, suddha dhaivat and kaisiki nishad. This raga is prevalent in Western music in a scale. It is named after Debussy, a famous French composer, who popularised it. The interval between the notes in the scale is whole tone or full tone.

Modulation is the equivalent of Srutibhedam in Western music. Its purpose is not to create a new scale but to provide for harmonic variety. It also helps to make longer compositions possible because changes of key contribute to a balance between the elements of repetition and contrast and thus help to sustain the interest of the listener. (*Music*, Daniel T Politoske)

New or Apoorva (Rare) Ragas

Often new ragas have been discovered through the device of Srutibhedam. Thus Muthiah Bhagavatar discovered Valaji by doing Srutibhedam on the madhyam of Abhogi. The Trinity have produced several kritis in apoorva ragas, ragas that are not widely known but in which they composed songs like Navarasakannada as in the case of Tyagaraja. We do not know whether they discovered them through the Srutibhedam exercise or independently of it. One interesting aspect is that in such cases Tyagaraja indicated the arohana and avarohana in the pallavi itself to help the singer. Thus the kriti "*Paluku kanda chak keranu gherune*" has the ascending and descending swaras: '*Paluku kanda chak*' (sa ga ma pa sa in the arohana) and *keranu gherune* (sa ni dha ma ga ri sa in the avarohana) in the pallavi. The late scholar Sangita Kalanidhi Dr S Ramanathan used to mention several such instances in his lectures.

On the Frontiers of Raga Music

There are rules governing ragas. One is that there should be a minimum of five swaras and the other is that there should be either madhyam or pancham in the arohana and avarohana. Still there are exceptions to the rule. Long ago, I heard B Subba Rao, a musicologist, pointing out how these rules had been breached. It was at a meeting of the Experts Committee of The Music Academy, Chennai, at its Annual Conference. He cited the instance of Jaltar Sarang, which has only sa ri ni in arohana and avarohana. What is more he had composed a varnam in that raga and rendered it beautifully on gottuvadyam. Muthiah Bhagavatar composed the raga Niroshtha, which means lipless, to help singers with a defect in the lip formation. It eschewed ma and pa that call for the lips to come together in pronunciation. The swaras are: chatusruti rishabha, antara gandhara, chatusruti dhaivat and kakali nishad.

Even more challenging is the attempt at tuning an entire song in arohana only. Film music maestro Ilayaraja achieved this impossible task in "*Kalaivaniye*" in Kalyani in the Tamil film Sindhubhairavi. It was sung by Yesudas. I have heard on good authority that Ilayaraja was the third composer in the world to achieve this, the other two being Handel and Beethoven, though I have not so far been able to identify the related scores of the last two.

Tyagaraja as a Poet

Tyagaraja was a poet in his approach to music in introducing intellectual subtleties, elegance in expression and poetic graces in his kritis. One good example is his kriti "*Alakalalla*" in Madhyamavati. It refers to Viswamitra's rapture looking at the waving curly forelocks playing on the face of Rama when he vanquished Maricha and when he broke Siva Dhanus (bow) at the swayamvara of Sita. At the precise place where the waving of the forelocks is

referred to in the sahitya the underlying rishabha also sways or oscillates in kampita gamaka! (See *The Art and Science of Carnatic Music*, Vidya Shankar.) This is one of the reasons that Tyagaraja is considered as much a poet as a vaggeyakara. Incidentally, it is the use of the kampita gamaka in rishabha that distinguishes Madhyamavati from Sri. The next time when the reader listens to an exposition of either Sri or Madhyamavati he should look for the identity mark of rishabha.

The bhava and spirit are effectively expressed in his kritis. Thus in “*Karubaru*” he wonders whether anyone else could have ruled Ayodhya so well as Rama did. He is shouting from the housetops about Ramrajya. And his exhilaration is well expressed in the opening note of gandhar in ‘ka’ being in the upper octave. As far as I know, it is perhaps the only kriti in Mukhari that commences in tara stayi gandhar. Incidentally, it is also an example of suchita swarakshara, referred to earlier.

Another outstanding contribution of Tyagaraja was sangatis that express both the raga and artha bhavas effectively. According to Rangaramanuja Iyengar, “*Chakkani raja*” in Kharaharapriya has 42 sangatis. The following have 21 sangatis each: “*Bhavanuta*” (Mohanam), “*Chera Ravademira*” (Ritigaulai), “*Doraguna*” (Bilahari) “*Najeevadhara*” (Bilahari) and “*O Rangasayee*” (Kambhoji). The sangatis are in the nature of a drill, an exercise to remember the words in the most important part of a sahitya. We know the chain effect of memory. Once we recall the beginning word or phrase of a poem or a sahitya the remaining words tumble on automatically!

Dikshitar as an Architect

Muthuswami Dikshitar was an architect in building the edifice of raga and kriti. They are not just songs but authoritative statements on the ragas. T L Venkatarama Iyer has made a couple of good points (*Muthuswami Dikshitar*, National Book Trust of India). He says that the full sancharas of a raga and its personality are reflected from mandara to tara sthayis in every kriti. Further, if one sings a kriti from the beginning in the akaara format without the text, it will constitute a good alapana of the raga! According to my guru, the late veena maestro Devakottai Narayana Iyengar, Dikshitar’s kritis are so self-contained that either the pallavi or a section of the song can be taken up for elaboration in Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi with plenty of scope for anulomam and pratilomam. (eg. Sri Subrahmanyaya Namaste in Kambhoji). (See *The Magnificence of Muthuswami Dikshitar*, A. Seshan, *Shanmukha*, October-December 2006.) The architectonics of Dikshitar kritis should be a fascinating study for musicologists. Herbert von Karajan, the distinguished Austrian conductor of Western symphonies, once told a group of trainees that they should throw away their first 100 performances of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, considered by many as the best in that genre. What he meant was that it took 100 performances to attain perfection and render it to everyone’s satisfaction. The same can be said of Dikshitar’s kritis. D K Pattammal was reported to have rehearsed every new Dikshitar kriti she learnt a hundred times before singing it on the public stage.

Yati is a feature of Dikshitar kritis. It is the technique of adding words progressively or deleting them or doing both. There are two types: gopucha yati, one that becomes shorter and shorter (eg “*Maye*” in Tarangini) and srothavaha yati that becomes longer and longer. In the former words in a sahitya taper down like a cow’s tail and in the latter they broaden and enlarge like a river. In “*Tyagaraja Yoga Vaibhavam*” (Ananda Bhairavi) one finds both the yatis, as described below.

GopuchaYati	Srothavaha Yati
Pallavi	Charanam
Tyagaraja yoga vaibhavam	Sam
Agaraja yoga vaibhavam	Prakasam
Rajayoga vaibhavam	Swarupa prakasam
Yoga vaibhavam	Thatva swarupa prakasam
Vaibhavam	Sakala thatva swarupa prakasam
Bhavam	Siva sakthyadi sakala thatva swarupa prakasam
Vam	

But what is interesting is that as the words diminish or grow they still have meanings. In “*Tyagaraja Yoga Vaibhavam*”, “*Agaraja*” refers to Himavan, father of Parvati. Raja yoga vaibhavam, yoga vaibhavam and bhavam have straight meanings. But the last word “vam” is not a filler. It is one of the mystic syllables of Siva signifying the emergence of creation. (*The Ambrosia of Muthuswamy Dikshitar*, M S Ramaswamy) But he was not the originator of the technique. Even before him Tevaram had the yati feature. It was called kondukutti in Tamil. An example is “*Chiraiyarum madakkiliye*” in Suddha Saveri. Sambamoorthy refers to the verse “*Aduttanai*” in Yadukulakambhoji (*South Indian Music*, Book III) Living in the Chola country Dikshitar might have been influenced by what he heard. But the beautiful part is that even as the cascading words either diminish or grow, the meanings of the sahitya are intact. I do not know whether there is any parallel for this feature in any other system of music.

Manodharma Sangeetam

Perhaps one unparalleled feature of Indian classical music, whether Carnatic or Hindustani, is the free rein given to the musician to expand either raga alapana or improvisations on selected lines in the sahitya, as in the case of niraval. Western classical music is composed music and a musician’s or orchestra’s ability is judged by the true rendering of what the composer intended. There is little scope for improvisation although different conductors may give different interpretations to the same composition or even the same conductor may give different interpretations to the same score on different occasions. (This statement of mine was confirmed by a British conductor when I raised the question at a lecture-demonstration at the British Council in Mumbai, a few years ago.) But they are not comparable to the manodharma sangeeta of Indian classical music. Jazz with its African origin is perhaps one exception in the West since it provides for improvised music.

What is even more astounding is the fact that a vocalist and his accompanists come together on the stage and perform without any rehearsal. In the West rehearsals are de rigueur. In some cases the violinist or sarangiya or the mridangist or the tabalchi may be accompanying the vocalist for the first time. Often the vocalist may decide on the spot about what to sing. We have heard of Madurai Mani Iyer going to the recording studio without any rehearsal and creating marvellous music that was a sell-out in the market. There is also a story about Sriram Parasuram, the noted vocalist-cum-violinist, being literally dragged out of his apartment on a day prior to an academic examination by a local music institution to accompany M D Ramanathan for the first time because the appointed violinist could not turn up! And the concert was a great success. The irony is that in Western music where the scores are set and the role of each artiste in, say, a symphony orchestra, is clearly spelt out, rehearsals are required. On the other hand, in Indian classical music with so much free play for the vocalist and the accompanying artiste, rehearsals are not normally done. There is no doubt that the complete understanding of the system on the part of everyone involved in music making helps in the matter. But then Western music also has a well set out system.

Records: In *South Indian Music (Book V)* Sambamoorthi has mentioned several achievements to the credit of the Indian music system. In my view they qualify to enter the *Guinness Book of World Records*. To mention a few, Indian music employs the largest number of scales. It employs the largest number of quarter tones, one-third tones and micro tones. It employs the largest number of rhythms with the classification into 35 talas, 175 talas and 108 talas.

Other Achievements: There are numerous other achievements that will require separate articles. A few examples are the ornamentations like gamakas, the Melakarta Scheme and the mathematics of rhythm

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Sri Seshan is a regular contributor to Sruti Magazine, Chennai, Narthaki, The online portal for Dance, and to SHANMUKHA, the professional quarterly magazine devoted to Indian classical music and dance, that is brought out by Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai. Shanmukha’s Special Issue (October-December 2010) is in commemoration of the birth bicentennial and centenary of Vadivelu (of the Thanjavur Quartet) and Vazhuvoor Ramiah Pillai, respectively.

COMPOSITION IN NORTH INDIAN KHYAL- A VIEW FROM PUNE

Veena Sahasrabuddhe as told to Hari Sahasrabuddhe- 1st December 2010

In the last decade I have noted the publication of at least 500 original khyal *bandishes*, creations of mostly young musicians. This is noteworthy in the context that traditional bandishes are considered the wealth of a well-educated singer. I shall say more about history later on.

A khyal bandish, of course, is a pre-composed song in the khyal style of singing. More generally, the term bandish is also used for compositions for tabla and kathak dance. However, in this essay I shall use the term to mean specifically a khyal bandish.

A bandish serves as the vehicle for improvised development of a raga. A singer can often elaborate upon a single two-line bandish in *vilambit* (slow tempo) for half an hour or more. Faster, *madhya* (medium) or *drut* (quick) tempo bandishes are typically performed after vilambit. Often a listener will associate a raga with the words of a fast bandish he or she has heard in that raga. In other words, a bandish also serves as an icon that identifies a raga in a listener's mind.

A bandish has two parts, called *sthai* and *antara*. *Sthai* is the refrain. The presentation of a bandish always begins and ends with singing of the *sthai*. A short phrase in the *sthai*, which ends in *sam*, the first beat of the tala cycle, is called the *mukhda*. The *mukhda* is repeated often in the midst of improvisation. The complete *sthai* is also sung from time to time.

As a rule of thumb, the *sthai* part sketches out the important raga phrases spanning the lower half of the octave, the *poorvanga*. The *antara* takes the listener higher up, and has its *sam* on the upper *shadja*. It acts as a melodic diversion from the *sthai*. Some orthodox singers do not improvise on the *antara* at all. They would simply sing the *antara* as composed and return to the *sthai* for further development. However, the *antara* is a convenient vehicle for elaboration in the upper range of one's voice. Today most singers, including myself, do improvise using the *antara*.

The khyal form of presenting raga music is believed to have been born in the 17th century, as a sort of fusion between sufi devotional qawwali and the older classical form dhrupad. Many bandishes of Niyamat Khan of the court of Muhammad Shah who ruled Delhi between 1719 and 1748 are still sung today. They can be recognized by his pen-name "sadarang" woven into the text. Bandishes in which one finds "adarang" are said to be by Niyamat Khan's nephew. According to another account, "adarang" and "manrang" refer to Niyamat Khan's two sons.

Many other singers of the past have laid their claim to immortality by leaving their imprint on bandishes. These include Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (sabrang), Faiyaz Khan (prempiya) and Vilayat Hussain Khan (pranpiya).

A discussion of khyal bandish will not be complete without describing the many variants to the basic form which we encounter.

Tarana, trivat and chaturang are variants based on the text used. Some syllables are conventionally used to describe the sounds produced on various instruments. For example, dir, da, ra etc. for sitar sounds, dha, tu, na etc. for tabla sounds. Tarana is a bandish which uses such syllables for text. In a trivat sitar and tabla (or pakhavaj) syllables and sargam (sa, re, ga, ma etc.) are all found in the text. In a chaturang, those three types are joined by regular words of a poem. The term khyalnuma is also used for a tarana in slow tempo.

Then there are stylistic variants. Thum-khyal and tap-khyal, as the names suggest, are compositions that mix the musical style of a thumri or tappa with khyal style. A ragamala is like a bandish. In it, the names of many ragas are cleverly woven into the text, and as the name of each raga appears in the text, that raga is heard in the melody.

Let us now turn to the creation of new bandishes. As I said in the beginning, one is witnessing the creation of a vast number of new bandishes. I have myself composed many bandishes for various reasons. For example, in raga Pooriya-Dhanashri (which shares the scale of Carnatic Pantuvarali) I didn't find a vilambit bandish with a *sam* on a low note. I felt that such a bandish would facilitate leisurely development of the raga. So I created such a bandish "ajahun na aye" myself.

I view the three bandishes I sing in a raga as a logical sequence. So I have created madhya-laya or drut bandishes which properly respond to the preceding bandish. Before the Mumbai-Pune expressway made road travel fast and

easy, I often took a morning train between Mumbai and Pune. The beat of its wheels has inspired many a bandish for me.

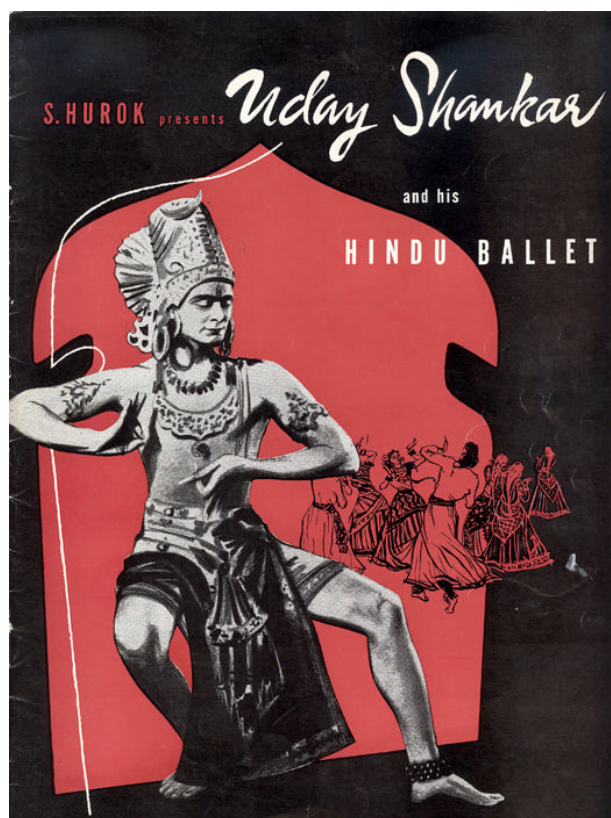
I am also fond of learning others' compositions. Occasionally I get the opportunity to learn a bandish sitting in front of a guru. I consider that lucky. Mostly with my father and elder brother, and in some cases with Pt. Balwantrao Bhatt and Pt. Vasant Thakar, I have learnt bandishes face-to-face. But more often, books of original bandishes written by composers and compilations containing traditional old bandishes, have been my gurus. When I have memorized the sthayi and antara of a bandish and can recite it confidently with tala, my learning has just begun. I have to then experiment with it, trying variations, improvising on it, trying mukhdas of various lengths, and so on. When the bandish becomes so familiar that I feel it is my own, only then can I make listeners enjoy it to the fullest extent.

Veena Sahasrabudhe comes from a family of musicians. Her father, late Pundit Shankar Shripad Bodas, was a disciple of Pundit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. She was initiated into Khayal singing by her father and her brother, late Pundit Kashinath Shankar Bodas. The vidwans laud the authenticity of her music while most listeners are moved by its directness and intensity. Besides being a popular performer, she is also a composer and a teacher.

From the 1950's- Sol Hurok: The Great Impresario-

Sol Hurok (1888-1974) was born in Ukraine. In 1906 he immigrated to the United States, eventually settling in Brooklyn where he began his managerial career by arranging concerts for labor organizations. In 1916 he was introduced to Anna Pavlova, who became the first of the many dance artists he would manage, and who inspired his love of ballet. The attractions that appeared under the banner "S. Hurok Presents" were numerous as well as diverse, including The Uday Shankar Ballet Company. Hurok loved stars and first-night glamour, and he promoted his attractions to the fullest extent.

The role of the legendary ballerina Anna Pavlova is seldom understood to its fullest extent in the context of the renaissance of the classical dance idiom in India- the chance encounters that brought her in contact with two major players who shaped the course of dance in India - Uday Shankar and Rukmini Devi Arundale. Uday Shankar whose colossal presence in the 1930's placed Indian dance on the world stage has practically disappeared into oblivion. The front and back covers from the 1952-1953 season brochure appear below:



G N BALASUBRAMANIAM - A LOVELY LIFETIME IN MUSIC

- Kiranavali Vidyasankar

I am sure every one of us goes around with regrets that we can do nothing about. Yet we do go around carrying them with us. One of mine is that I wasn't born in the Golden Era of great musicians. Even from the sampling of the recordings that are available today, one can see what one has missed. And then you have the older generation telling you about their live experiences and interactions with those great masters, eyes bright with pride and admiration for their charming appearances and personalities. While all these are wonderful to know, it doesn't actually make you feel any better! From the photographs of G N Balasubramaniam (GNB to his fans), I definitely know I have missed something that I was sure to have been bowled over! The handsome face radiates sparkling brilliance, and the bearing is nothing short of royal.

GNB's music has often been described with words such as revolutionary, breathtaking, awe-inspiring, glittering and scintillating. While his recordings clearly show that those adjectives were not misapplied, the additional qualities that I perceive are a certain nobility and dignity. I actually cannot dissociate them from his music. To me, the sparkle in his music comes as much from the nobility and dignity of his expression as from his exceptional mind. It lends a certain natural aristocracy and aura to his musicianship.

GNB's rendition of compositions always carried that extra element of attraction that it would instantly draw you to it. In fact, one has to make a conscious attempt to be open to other versions of the same compositions. Who can ignore the allure of say a *Tappagane* (Shuddhabangala) or a *Kalayami raghuramam* (Begada) as sung by him? The examples are of course numerous. The feature that I particularly find appealing in his music however, is his *manodharma*. His sharpness of thought and crispness in delivery shine through even when he is in an exploratory mood, when the general tendency is to meander.

I have always felt that musicians who are good at raga alapana enjoy outstanding success as creative vidwans, and this is borne out perfectly by GNB. It would be no exaggeration to say that GNB's strength in this area lay in his sense of structure and eye for the unusual. A short raga sketch by GNB would be a very vivid portrayal of the defining contours of the raga. His very opening note or phrase would clearly convey the raga, which is the key to tricky ragas that are not often ventured into such as Malavi and Kiranavali. He would expertly cover the various octaves using long and short linking phrases, while peppering it with some unique ideas. A full-blown alapana would have the whole works - long *karvai*-s at key swaras, leisurely build-up of the raga in a very methodical manner, *rakti*-filled phrases in various speeds and of course his trademarked fireworks in the form of *briga*-s at unimaginable speeds! Oftentimes such full-blown alapanas would be done in two or three phases by him. The second phase of the alapana where he would dwell in a leisurely manner between the Ga and Ni area is especially haunting. One can't help recollecting his treatment of ragas like Todi, Shanmukhapriya, Kambhoji or Nattaikurinji.



Tanam-singing is another specialty of GNB's music, but less-mentioned. The lovely gait he would set for them were such that enjoyment for the rasika and success for the musician in him was guaranteed. GNB would often

pick unusual ragas and lines for his neraval and make them unforgettable. Apart from highlighting his high level of artistry, such choices would also add the lovely element of surprise. An example of an outstanding neraval in an unusual raga that springs to the mind right away is his extensive neraval for *Hitavumata* in *Sarasamadana* (Kapinarayani). What made him a completely well-rounded vidwan was that his strength in one aspect of *manodharma* didn't mean weakness in any others. As much as all of the above were his strengths, so was his kalpanaswara singing. His fluency in singing continuous swara sequences in the higher speeds was equally matched by the *bhava*-oriented slow swaras. Here again, he would bring in many elements of surprises with his choice of *eduppu*-s (starting points).

GNB's music has stood the test of time and especially the dissecting minds of today's listeners, who somehow seem to lean towards the intellectual aspects. This is only because he achieved that enviable balance between emotion and intellect which oftentimes remains an elusive combination for most. His extra-ordinary gifts for super-fast brigas, while being his USP were also the grist for his detractors' mills. However, GNB himself seems to have been perfectly aware of the fact that his dazzling abilities for speed needed to be used only as a tiara, and that real beauty and strength lay in a slower, solid foundation. Without this awareness it is highly unlikely that GNB would have enjoyed the uniform success he did for a lifetime.

At the end of the day, the quality that impresses me most in GNB's music was its natural evolution into a slower and more mature style. In my opinion, this reveals a high level of artistic security, discrimination and sophistication. It is especially remarkable that for the style of music he was naturally gifted with and chose to pursue, GNB never felt compelled to eternally prove his youthfulness and power-packed energy in the form of racy brigas. He became more measured with time, and his music acquired a contemplative tone. Like thousands of others before me, I have been unable to resist being captivated by the youthful vigor in his renditions of compositions like *Radhasameta* (Mishra Yaman), *Dharmashravana* (Durga), *Dikkuteriyada* (Ragamalika), *Evaramadugutura* (Kalyani) or *Shobhillu saptaswara* (Jaganmohini). But the ones that have touched me very deeply are the slower renditions of such weighty compositions as *Etavuna nerchitavo* (Yadukulakambhoji) and *Venkateshaninnu* (Madhyamavati). It is possible that I associate a poignancy with them because I realise they were some of his last years. Or it could be that I perceive a greater degree of nobility of thought and expression in these renditions. Either way, they clearly show that GNB had a very lovely musical journey in his lifetime.

About the author: Kiranavali Vidyasankar is a Carnatic vocalist, Chitravina artist, writer and teacher. At age 2, she was able to identify over 200 ragas, demonstrate the 175 talas, answer numerous other technical questions pertaining to Carnatic music, and was hailed a child prodigy. She is the grand-daughter of the famous Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar and has studied with three distinguished musicians-- her father Chitravina Narasimhan, her brother Chitravina Ravikiran, and the late T. Brinda.

Editor's Note:

"Bombay Sisters" C. Saroja and C. Lalitha will receive the prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi award of the Music Academy and will preside over the 84th annual conference to be held from December 15, 2010 to January 1, 2011.

A press release said the annual conference and concerts will be inaugurated by Shiv Nadar, Chairman, HCL group. The awards will be conferred on the Sadas, which will be presided over by Nobel laureate Venkataraman Ramakrishnan, on the final day of the conference.

The committee will also confer the Sangita Kala Acharya awards on Suguna Varadachari, vocalist, and Rhadha, dance guru. Vocalists Manakkal S. Rangarajan and Parassala Ponnammal will receive the T.T.K. award.

The musicologist award has been conferred upon R. Sathyanarayana. The Pappa Venkataramiah award will be given to violinist Radha Narayanan.

This is only the second time in its history that the Sangita Kalanidhi award is being given to a duo following the 2002 award conferred on the Sikkil sisters.

-The Hindu

2010 Thyagaraga Aradhana Day



Group rendering of Utsava Sampradaya Kritis and Pancharatna Kritis



Concert: Salem Shriram- Vocal, Sandhya Srinath-Violin, Rajna Swaminathan- Mridangam

Images 2010 Spring Concert Series



Nriyagram Dance Ensemble- photos courtesy Nan Melville including image on rear cover



Unnikrishnan accompanied by Embar Kannan- Violin and Arjun Kumar- Mridangam



Vijay Siva accompanied by R.K. Shriramkumar- Violin and J. Vaidhyathan- Mridangam



Kiranavali Vidyasankar- DKP Talk



Nirmala Rajasekhar- Veena Concert

Images 2010 Fall Concert Series



Dr. L. Subramaniam and Ambi Subramaniam in concert



Maargam: A divine journey- Shijith Nambiar- Parvathy Menon



Veena Sahasrabuddhe - Rachana Bodas (Vocal Support), Kedar Naphade (Harmonium), Vishal Nagar (Tabla)



Malladi Brothers accompanied by B.U. Ganesh Prasad (Violin) and Patri Satish Kumar (Mridangam)

Images from 2010 Fall Season



Sruti Youth Group at Dr. L.Subramaniam Concert



A very pleased Sruti Youth Group post Malladi Brothers Concert



Sruti Board and families With Drs. Sahasrabuddhe

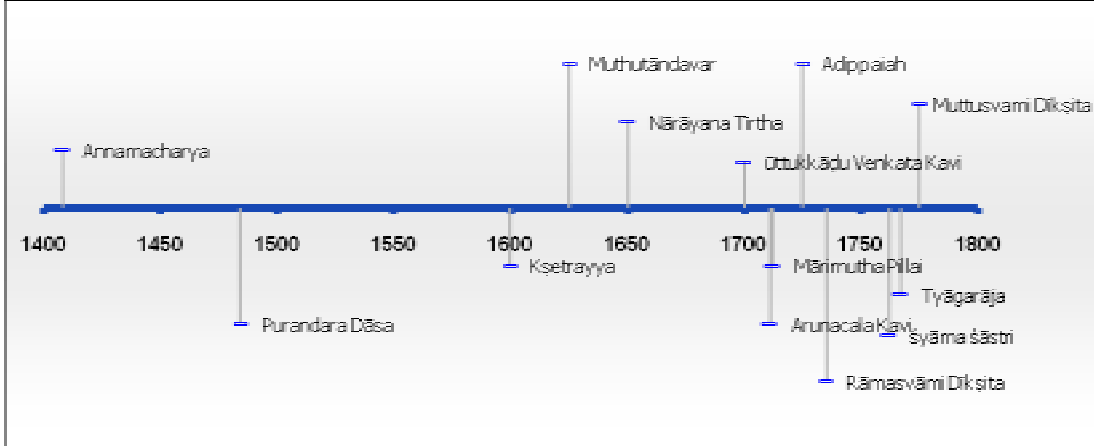


Sruti Board With Shijith Nambiar and Parvathy Menon ensemble

A Musical Continuum...

Vidya Jayaraman

If one were to ask the average carnatic music student, a musician or a rasika to tell us what a time-line of composer data plotted against the years they were born, a graph that looks like this is most likely to emerge. A few data points for the Pretrinity composers such as Purandara Dāsa, Annamayya, Kṣetrayya and Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha and perhaps in recent days ūttukkāḍu Venkaṭasubbayar. And then the timeline will move on to Tyāgarāja, Dīkṣita and śyāma śāstri popularly known as ‘The Trinity’.



This article attempts to examine the following:

1. Is the above timeline graph representative of the complete picture? Were the trinity born in a period of musical vacuum and create melodies and masterpieces out of nothing?
2. What exactly was the state of music of the Tanjāvūr area, a century or two prior to the the time of the musical?

A close scrutiny of historical and musical records during the time 1600 AD -1750 AD reveals details regarding the influencers, innovators and inspirations of the Trinitarians of Carnatic music were and enables us to reflect upon the long and complex evolutionary chain that this art form is. This period marked the confluence of various musical styles – Migrating musicians across the regions from Andhra, Karnāṭaka, nāma sankīrtana saints who served as gurus to the Marāṭha Kings and of course the natives in the Tanjāvūr region. This resulted in the emergence of several key musical ideas and the entire period became a high point in creativity and innovation in music, literature, dramatics, and philosophy. It was this development that took its logical course of being standardized and normalized by later composers. Further, all these are based on recorded history in the form of manuscripts and historical references in the Sarasvati mahāl library. A broad sweeping survey of the musical scene reveals the following:

- The existence of several poets, composers, musicians, vaiṇīkas, playwrights who enriched and expanded the available pool of compositions.
- Ongoing efforts at compilation of rāga material in the form of rāga lakṣaṇas and collating kaṭaka tānas ie rāga encyclopaedia with scalar material and sancāras permissible in a rāga.

- Prevalence of rāgas such as āhiri, suraṭi, kām̐bhoji, toḍi, re(va)gupti, aṭhāna, śankarabharaṇa, gaulipantu, pantuvarāḷi, gummakām̐bhoji, mangalakaiśiki
- The arrival and establishment of Hindustani ragas like Toya asāveri, Immanakalyāṇi, jījevanti, brndāvani, nāyakikānara, bibhās, jogi asāveri, mallāri and bilāval etc in the carnatic firmament.
- A wide range of compositional forms – prabhandas, yakṣagāna repertory, kīrtanas, svarajatis, tillānas, rāgamālikas, varṇas and compositional innovation.
- Introduction of new rāgas, and melodic enrichment of existing rāgas.

1. The composers:

Composers such as Śahāji, Girirāja Kavi, Melaṭṭur Vīrabhadrayya and Kuppusāmayya, several other names are found.

Śahāji(1684-1724) was the son of Ekoji and lived a short life of four decades. In this short life span, he built an enormous retinue of scholars, musicians, philosophers in his court. He was also a proficient writer of plays, operatic themes and musical compositions.

Girirāja Kavi(1700-1728+), was a composer of yakṣagānas , padas in kaiśiki form (romantic theme) who lived during the reigns of Śahāji II(1684-1712) and Śarabhoji I (1712-1728). It is unclear and divided opinions prevail on his identity as to whether he was the same as the Girirāja brahmam whose name figures in the genealogy of Tyāgarāja or not. Irrespective of who he was, his musical contribution is immense.

Vīrabhadrayya or Caukam Vīrabhadrayya as he was known was perhaps the one pioneer and giant that the carnatic world has almost forgotten today. He was a contemporary of Pratāpa Simha (1739-1763) and composed in sanskrit and Telugu.

Matrbhūṭayya is said to have been a proficient pentalinguist who knew Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannḍaa, Marāṭhi and Hindi. As his name indicates, he was devoted to the form of śiva in Tiruchirapalli and used the mudra, Trīśiragiri vāsa.

Kuppusāmayya lived during the time of Amarasimha and wrote a number of śrngārarasa pradhāna compositions.

2. Compositional Forms:

In terms of the compositional form, kīrtanas, prabhandas, padas, svarajatis, varṇas, kīrtanas, tillānas and the rāgamālika were found in profusion.

Śahāji 's musical compositions included several operas – prabhandas type of compositions, plays of the yakṣa gāna type, padas on tyāgesa of tiruvārur and other titular temple deities- Vaidīśvaran Koil, Tiruvārūr, Tanjāvūr etc (the idea of kṣetra krtis), vedāntic compositions, and short compositions closely resembling the kīrtana form etc. Vīrabhadrayya's compositional span was an entire gamut ranging from svarajatis, varṇas, kīrtanas, tillānas and even rāgamālikas. He was the first to compose in the form that is known today as 'svarajati'. In fact, his huseni svarajati inspired several other composers who followed him to model compositions on it. One such clone is the svarajati, emāyalādira attributed variously to the ancestors of the Tanjore quartet, Melattur Venkatarāma Śāstri and to ādiappaiah- Syāma Śāstri's guru. The composition Pāhimām Brhanannāyaki attributed to the Tanjore quartet and Svāti Tirunāl is also modeled on this. It is also amply clear that Syāma Śāstri modeled his svarajatis

without jatis after Vīrabhadrayya's Mohana Svarajati, *Modi seya meragādani*. Ramasvāmi Dīkṣita, the father of Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita is said to have learnt music from Vīrabhadrayya and hence it is no wonder that he became a remarkable composer of rāgamālikas and their familial mastery of that compositional form continued until the time of Subbarāma Dīkṣita. Vīrabhadrayya has composed a ṣaḍrāgamālika (in six rāgas), *nā mohanāṅgunī* with the acyuta varada mudra.

Kuppusāmayya's many compositions in the kīrtana format are found published in the early publications including the Gāyaka Locanam and the appendix of the Sampradāya Pradarśini.

3. Ornamentation and compositional dexterity

This era was known for intricate musical ornamentation and compositional dexterity.

Śahāji was a clear role model for both Ramasvami Dīkṣita and his illustrious son Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita. Śahāji's compositions contain many alankāras including the use of palindromic structures, svarākṣaras etc. Rāmasvāmi Dīkṣita's "sāra sanayana sarasā sāratarā ratarasā", a daru in gangātarangiṇi thus finds its predecessor in the re(va)guṇṭi rāga daru of Śahāji, aptly named Savyāpasavya bhāṣādvaya daru with a palindromic structure. Similarly many of Śahāji's compositions make use of svarākṣara with lines such as *sarigāni mā pada* - Yet another idea developed later by Rāmasvāmi Dīkṣita in the svarasthāna pada varṇam – *sarigāni dāni* toḍi. It may be pointed out that in one of the manuscripts containing the padas of Girirāja Kavi, there is a beautiful svarasthāna padam in toḍi rāga, aṭa tāḷa. nī sari sāti of is a lovely composition of Kuppusāmayya that begins with bristling beauties of svarākṣara in toḍi and ni ke dayato – a composition in raga kalyāṇi that begins on the niṣāda. Similarly, in the realm of using rāga mudras in compositions we find that it is Vīrabhadrayya who is the pioneer. His rāgamālika set to Mohana, Toḍi, Varāli, Huseni, Nāṭa and Kannaḍa has skilful usage of rāga mudras and ciṭṭasvaras. Incidentally it must be pointed out that Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita does not include rāga mudras (or at least non-sūcita ones) for Toḍi and Huseni.

4. Musical Innovation

Traditional rakti ragas were in currency in the form of compositions such as śambho puramadaśamana vibho – kedāragaula – ādi, ekkāḍiki poyye- bhairavi with lilting long caraṇas employing numerous short alliterative phrases. Other ragas such as darbār were present in the form of śri venkateśvaruni pādamulu – a composition in darbār with the elongated gāndhāra and the *G m R* prayoga. Mātrubhūṭayya's *Nīmadi callaga* in ānandabhairavi that is found in circulation in concerts even today and can be considered a prime example of the upāṅga form of the rāga with the *pdps* prayoga.

Further, the presence of many compositions such as tarali boyye – toḍi and kanugoni – Kalyāṇi show us that melodies such as toḍi and kalyāṇi previously cited in śāstra as foreign or northern (auttara) origin had already established themselves in their carnatic forms a few centuries before the trinity notwithstanding Venkatamakhin's injunctions about their unfitness for compositions – yet another case of creative prayoga taking śāstra head on!

According to Dr.S.Seetha, Girirāja Kavi is the earliest to have composed in rāgas such as Brndāvani and Dvijāvanti. It is thus a cliché to state that it was Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita who brought in Hindustāni ragas during his journey to Kāśi. Similarly hamviru was already in prevalence in the form of mātrubhūṭayya's composition rādā nā mi dayā.

Whether Girirāja Kavi was the familial ancestor of Tyāgarāja or not, he certainly was one in the musical sense. Like Tyāgarāja, he invented new rāgas - Śarabharāja candrika, Śarabha lalita, Śarabha Kalpam, Suranidhi and Śarabhanalīna, all named after his patron-king. The melodies of these ragas however are lost to posterity. In spite of the absence of complete musical notation, based on the availability of songs with the rāga names listed we can certainly presume, minimally the prevalence and presence of these rāgas in popular currency.

In Śahāji's tyāgarāja vinodha citra prabhanda there is a composition set to the seven gauḷānta rāgas (rāgas all ending in gauḷa) – Nārāyaṇagauḷa, Kannaḍagauḷa, Mālavagauḷa, Ritigauḷa, Purvagauḷa, Chāyāgauḷa and Kedāragauḷa). This idea was executed again by Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita in his Nilotpālāmbā vibhakti krtis employing the gauḷānta rāgas with the addition of gauḷā. It is indeed an irony that many musicians who sing Śahāji's gauḷānta compositions in lecture demonstrations today have to look into the music of Dīkṣita to reconstruct their forms. Similarly, in one of Śahāji's the padas on Tyāgesa , there are couplets on each of the grahas once again serving to illustrate the foundations of musical material that the Dīkṣitar family built upon.

5. Tala, Laya and Rhythm:

Śahāji's attainments are not just on the melodic, lyrical, philosophical and dramatic side and also include the realm of tāla. Several rare tālas are found used including: laghuśekhara , simhalīla, hamsalīla. Rāgas such as lalitapancoma, Surati, Madhyamāvati, Bhairavi , Kuranji, Pāḍi, asāveri are commonly found and several Hindustani rāgas too occur in his works. It is again in the tyāgarāja vinodha citra prabhanda, that we find the first seeds of compositions (that are not sūlādis) but set to sūlādi sapta tālas. The *saptasāgara sūlādi prabhanda līlā daru* is set to the seven principal tālas , an idea borrowed by Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita in his vāra krtis on the various planets. It was however the development of the cāpu and its variant tālas that can be said to be one of the key contributions of the time of the trinity.

6. Sāhitya:

The sāhitya of the period was not classical but in with the contemporary regional usages and the regional and linguistic confluence is evident. The bhakti and philosophical framework were laid during this period. Śahāji has also authored a maṇipravāḷa prabhanda (maṇi – gems, pravāḷa –pearl, a name for compositions set in multiple languages) in the Tyāgarāja Vinoda Citra prabhanda. After śahāji, Mātrbhutayya was thus the earliest to introduce the maṇipravāḷa style in composition in his darus. His daru, *bāro kṛṣṇa* contains Kannaḍa, Marāṭhi, Hindi, Telugu and Tamil. Four of his compositions are found notated in the anubandha of the Sangīta Sampradāya Pradarśini. Later composers such as Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita and Svāti Tirunal made use of the maṇipravāḷa type of compositions. It is interesting to note that Śahāji describes the goddess as '**sangīta rasike**' in a composition in nādanāmakriya - a term his musical successor uses in his Toḍi Kamalāmba navāvaraṇa! Girirāja Kavi's, philosophical composition māyā ni vanjana, addressed to the delusionary power of māya, is on the same theme as Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita's tarangini composition māye tvam yāhi in tarangini. Similarly, in the composition of kuppusāmayya, śri venkateśvaruni padamulu – darbār the sāhitya is as under:

murahari yaniyalla karimoralīḍa ganu munu brocinadi vina
paramabhakṭuḍai na prahlādu koraku kambamulonunḍivedaḷa
kaliyugātyaksa pratyaksa mai te kada mayemi nlgu

These and other such usages are very reminiscent of the bhakti-filled ideas found in tyāgarāja's compositions. Once again the caraṇa of *ni sari sati* reminds us of the construct of compositions such as elā nīdaya rādu in athāṇa or even the way the alliterations or the antyakṣara prāsa (rhyme of ending syllables) as employed in akṣaya linga vibho.

ghana vana nidhi mada śoṣaṇa kamanīya / mṛdu bhāṣaṇa anupama kaustubha bhuṣaṇa /
vaisnavānuja śikṣhā varavibhīṣaṇa rakṣā bhUśrinīlayādhyakṣā / budhajanasamrakṣā hari

Conclusion:

It becomes important to understand that Carnatic music and its compositional forms have gone through many courses of evolutionary cycles in their historical development. The time of the musical trinity was but one link in a long and glorious line of composers, musicians and poets. It is for this reason that Tyāgaraja invokes the various mahānubhāvas and Vaggeyakāras that lived before and during his time and pays obeisance to them and it is for the same reason that his students continued the vision of composing, evolving their own musical creativity in the form of new compositions and musical innovation though each generation has their role models.

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A Glimpse at the Master

by Priyanka Dinakar



After hearing my music guru, Kiranavali aunty, rave about Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri R. K. Srikantan's concert at the music season last year, I yearned to listen to his music. This summer, when I visited Bangalore, I discovered that he lived close to my grandparents' house. I was extremely fortunate that someone of his stature was ten minutes away and soon it was arranged with my grandfather's help that I could learn a few songs from him.

On the day of my first class, I was extremely nervous because I had not met Shri R. K. Srikantan before and did not know what he would be like. At nine-thirty sharp, my mother, my grandfather, and I found a rickshaw willing to take us to his house. The winding roads of Seshadripuram did not help my nervousness at all. After many stops inquiring the whereabouts of Putta Rangana Road, we finally found his house on a quiet, beautiful part of the town. An exuberant, stray dog near his house reassured me to be happy.

We entered his lively house and were welcomed by him and his son emerging through the door. He led us to a tiny but memorable room to the right. The room was the most inspiring one that I have ever seen. It was thirty square feet of the most number of awards that one will ever see in a single room. The awards included the Sangeetha Kalanidhi title and the Sangeet Natak Akademi award. There were stacks of music books and notes rising precariously from the floor halfway to the ceiling. Several sandalwood garlands adorned the idols given to him. In the middle of this chaos he took his seat on his wooden chair.

He first asked me to sing a varnam. I sang my favorite varnam in Kedaragowla. Then he asked me to sing a kriti. Kiranavali aunty planned out two songs for me to sing to give him an idea of what to teach me. He asked if I knew songs on the Goddess Saraswati and proceeded to teach me *Sri Saraswati* in *Arabhi*.

Each of my classes went in this similar, organized fashion with Shri R. K. Srikantan asking me to start with a varnam and sing a kriti of my choice. Then he would review a couple songs he had already taught me and conclude with a new song he would teach me. When he taught me a new song, he would have me repeat until I got the sangathis and nuances and then ask for my recorder and sing a clean version without interruptions. Most days, we felt that the Karnataka Electric Board was not on our side due to power cuts in Seshadripuram during my class time. The electronic Sruti box decided to turn on when my classes were ending. Melodic sounds of "Tarkari, Tomato, Pattani" from the street vendors would drift through the windows, and seeing Sri R. K. Srikantan unperturbed by this din taught me focus.



For a nonagenarian, his memory was amazing, as he would remember order of the various kritis he taught me in the three-week time period. He put thought to make sure that he taught me songs to cover many different composers such as Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Thyagaraja, Veena Seshanna, Mysore Vasudevachar, and Swati Tirunal. On some days, he would be patiently waiting for me in the room on his wooden chair and on some days he would be in the culmination of a class during our arrival. Each time he would look dignified with a chandan tilak (sandalwood) and a red shawl. He would end every class taking out his planner, borrowing my pen, and marking off the date and time of my next class. I feel very fortunate that I was able to associate with this great master. I will always remember him singing what is now one of my favorite songs, *Rama Ninna* in *Anandabhairavi*.

I look forward to hearing him perform in a concert setting.

Priyanka Dinakar is an 8th grader at The Wyndcroft School. She learns Carnatic music from Kiranavali Vidyasankar and is an avid listener of the same.

A magical glimpse of Gurukulavasam with Veenaji

By Kamakshi Mallikarjun

Veenaji's concert was THE concert that I had been assiduously counting down the months, days and minutes for ...

My family members who happen to be on facebook also vicariously participated in both the anticipation and the boundless enjoyment when they realized that it was a cherished opportunity to hear Veenaji live in a concert arranged by Sruti in Philadelphia.. not via CD !

The coupling of the concert with the lecdem the next day helped take this experience to much greater levels by enabling the smallest of glimpses of Gurukulavasam with Veenaji.

And that is indeed how I have viewed my participation in her music workshop 2 years back as well. In that workshop, we first repeated the scales and exercises in Yaman and Poorya Dhansri. Then, Veenaji taught us the hauntingly beautiful bandish There Daras in Poorya Dhanashri. Every time I look at its notation in Hindi that Veenaji shared, it brings back memories of Ammupatti (the legendary Smt M S Subbulakshmi/MS)'s music notebooks with the music transcribed in her own hand.

And at that workshop, when Veenaji tuned the tanpura and strummed it, the reverbrating nadam brought tears to my eyes. It was very emotional for me because it took me back to the days of hearing that kind of nadam in a perfectly tuned tanpura strummed by AmmuPatti at Kalki Gardens. Veenaji also took the extraordinary step of having each of us take turns on strumming that tanpura, like she would have done for her full time students in India. Just for that spellbinding two hours, my dreams were no longer day dreams ...

The love for Hindustani music in my family emanated from Ammupatti herself. And as MS said *"I listened to a lot of good music on the radio (the neighbours'; we didn't own one!) from the window still above the staircase. I loved to hear Abdul Kareem Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan in the silence of the night."* (From the article The M S Phenomenon by Gowri Ramnarayan in the Hindu)

What is very intriguing is that apart from Radha Chithi (Smt Radha Vishwanathan) who has always been AmmuPatti's musical shadow, it is Ammupatti's niece Thangam (my mother, who was also raised by AmmuPatti) and grandnieces Gowri Ramnarayan (journalist/art critic for the Hindu) and me who were the ones who most imbibed that deep and abiding love of Hindustani music.

My mother also spurred me to delve more into this world because she could identify Hindustani ragas as swiftly as Carnatic ragas and she proceeded to display that skill in one of Pandit Ravi Shankar's outdoor concerts at IIT Madras Mardi Gras event. Just like Veenaji did at the Sruti concert in that lilting Ragamala, he too traversed with dazzling ease through so many ragas and my mom identified them all in quick succession, even before I could fathom what was happening. It definitely increased my determination to more diligently listen to Sangeet Sarita at 7:30 AM to try and get equally familiar



with those ragas.

But, it is listening to Veenaji's Language of Raga Music CDs that capture the essence of the basic grammar of Hindustani music and the IIT Bombay lectures that she and Hariji have magnanimously shared on the net and attending the recent lecdem in person and hearing the explanations whose clarity matched the pitch perfect demonstrations, that have truly helped me get a much better understanding of the world of Hindustani music. The laya intricacies :what an ingenious concept to leverage the electronic tala counter so that one can visually track the reaching of 'Sam' and also the fact that there are so many intricate talas ... the raga swaroopa intricacies .. that amazing eye-opener of how 3 ragas Marwa, Poorya and Sohini can have same notes and be so different because of the way their alaap is approached..

And, absolutely, I hope that I will be able to hear an even longer rendition of that mesmerizing Lalit and even more amazing insights into its scale; yes, a universal feeling for all of us who yearned for that lecdem to keep continuing ...

I made immediate calls to both my cousin Gowri and my mom by the end of that memorable weekend of Veenaji's concert and lecdem itself. I called Gowri to share that Veenaji had sung Chandrakauns (one of Gowri's favorite ragas and mine as well) and how enthralling it was to hear the beautiful bandish Chandraki Chandni aptly chosen given it was the full moon that day, followed by the fantastic Chandrakauns tarana. I also shared about how well Rachna Bodas had accompanied Veenaji and how lucky Rachna is to be Veenaji's student.

And given our shared experiences, it was Gowri who also fully understood how and why I was still relishing the recursive after glow of Veenaji's Chandrakauns that touched my soul which in turn stirred the soulful melodic memories of AmmuPatti indulging requests to sing Chandrakauns for us and why I was seamlessly flitting between both ethereal worlds.

Gowri also listened bemusedly to my excited recounting of not only attending Veenaji's fantastic lec-dem the next day but also getting to eat dinner with her and the fact that Veenaji had liked my question about Lalit. These anecdotes were appreciated by my work colleagues as well and with the added knowledge of the fact that I was in the throes of an intense project they pronounced that this is the best thing that could have possibly happened to me and what providential timing !

And when I talked to my mom (who is now in her eighties) she pointedly asked that since it was a ragamala, the names of the ragas would have come in the lyrics and so was I able to keep up? She too fully understood why this would be a weekend I would always treasure. She also asked me when was the first I had heard Veenaji and I had to remind her of the following episode.

Whenever I went back to Madras, a mandatory event was to go and buy additional cassettes and I always got both North and South Indian classical music. That is how, by serendipity, I came across a Music Today cassette titled Tarana – Flights of Melody and I immediately bought that cassette because I love Taranas and even more because one of the ragas was Chandrakauns. And yes, the artist was Veenaji and that is the first time I ever listened to Veenaji. I was simply blown away and was longing to hear her live. And I finally got the first opportunity to do so, 2 years ago.

And as the phrase goes, it was definitely meant to be. Again by chance, I heard that a local organization called Sangeet Society was arranging Veenaji's concert in New Jersey. But the location was too far for me to drive. I was at a friend's house for Ganesh Chaturthi which was indeed uncanny because not only were all the obstacles to attending this most desired for concert melting away, there was a completely unforeseen additional boon waiting for me as well. I discovered that Sundari and Balu would be going to the concert and they offered me a ride, I also met Suraja who floored me by telling me that Veenaji would be staying with her and she is arranging a workshop and would I like to attend that as well. And that is how those captivating encounters occurred,

And as I continue to be enveloped again by Veenaji's soothing and divine music and by her innate grace and kindness, I am also very thankful to Sruti and its dedicated voluntary board members for making it all possible.

About the author: Kamakshi Mallikarjun is a classical music and dance enthusiast and local contributor to Sruti Ranjani.

MARGAM A Divine Journey – Shijith Nambiar & Parvathi Menon

By P. Swaminathan

On October 9, 2010 SRUTI, The India Music and dance Society, presented a brilliant Bharatanatyam duet by none other than the brilliant couple Shijith Nambiar and his wife Parvathi Menon. This is not the first time that the SRUTI audience has witnessed dance duets by husband and wife teams. SRUTI presented dance recitals by Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari in both Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi styles (1991), Anuradha and Shridhar (2006), Shantha and Dhananjayan (1990), Radha and Raja Reddy (2003) to mention a few. However, the presentation by Shijith and Parvathi took the duet presentation to a much higher standard which is going to be hard for others to catch-up.



The dance sequence (Margam) performed by Shijith and Parvathi followed the Kalakshetra style originally formulated by Rukmini Devi Arundale founder of Kalakshetra school of performing arts. They started their performance with an invocation to Lord Chandramouli in the raga *bowli* which is in accordance with conventional format of a Bharatanatyam performance where the artist begins their performance with either a pushpanjali or alaripu. This was followed by the *Pièce de résistance*, of the program, the pada varnam (Sarasa Shara Sundara) in the raga *neelambari*. Varnam in general and pada varnam in particular, offers expansive scope to the dancers to bring out their best nritta and abhinaya. The artistic challenge is to mime the emotional aspects of the nayaka and nayaki using improvisational abhinaya during lyrical rendering of the varnam, then

suddenly switch gear to project the joy of rhythm through the jathi that follows. This is even more challenging in a dance duet like in the present case as against a solo performance. Shijith and Parvathi excelled each other in demonstrating their abilities in nritta and natya. The artistic interpretation and the sancharis demonstrated the creativity of the performers. The pangs of separation of nayaki from nayaka were well portrayed by Parvathi and Shijith. At times it appeared that they were dancing for themselves expressing their emotions forgetting that they were enacting the scene. Portrayal of crocodile in the Gajendra moksham episode was done extremely well by Shijith with his facial expressions and elaborate movements. The disrobing (of Draupadi) act was enacted so well which led the audience to visualize what would have happened in the actual scene of Mahabharata. The performance of jathis either solo or in combination (like in a jugal bandhi) and the creative extension of adavus demonstrated the high caliber of the performing artists.

Shijith and Parvathi went on to perform a Javali (love song using the poetic imagery characteristic of the romantic-devotional movement) in the raga *cenjurutti* depicting the emotions of separation (viraha). Shijith and Parvathi beautifully displayed their brilliant abhinaya in the following three items, Alingana (describing Ardanareeswara in *brindavana saranga*), Sakhya (Kuchelopakyanam in *behag*) and Prathama (bhajan in *bowri*). Through out the concert the artists portrayed Sringara (love not only rati sringara but also bhakthi sringara) very well which is note worthy. Portrayal of rati sringara, describing the essence of the relationship between a man and woman, was brought out extremely well in Alingana and Prathama. Throughout the



performance whether it is portrayal of rati sringara, bhakthi sringara or feeling of viraha, the artists appeared to be actually living through those scenes. They concluded the performance with a scintillating tillana in the raga *revathy*.



The live musical team gets a lion's share for the great success of the dance program. Just like the great chemistry between Shijith and Parvathi made the dance program a memorable one, the rapport between the vocalist, violinist, nattuvanar and the mridangist added to the sense of joy and pleasure among the audience. There were a lot of eye contacts between the musicians and the performing artists especially during those items depicting sringara rasa which helped the artists in taking their performance to a greater artistic level.

It does not require a genius to realize that the field of Bharatanatyam has a

gender in-equity. One can easily visualize the small number of male dancers as against countless female stars in the world of Bharatanatyam in particular and classical dance in general. After seeing the graceful and commanding performance of Shijith, there is no reason why men should shy away from such a wonderful art. It is also interesting to note numerous male dance teachers including the founding architects of the present-day Bharatanatyam, the famous Tanjore quartet of Chinnayya, Ponniah, Sivanandam and Vadivelu of the Tanjore Court during the Marathi King Saraboji's time (1798–1824).

Bharatanatyam can be thought of as an acronym coming from the words Bhava (Expression), Raga (Music), Tala (Rhythm) and Natya (Dance). Given this definition, it is interesting to see the debate among connoisseurs of classical dance especially Bharatanatyam whether to have varnam (considered the *Pièce de résistance*) as a required item or not. The proponents of varnam insist that varnam gives expansive scope to revel in the rhythm, moods and the music of the dance. The artists can display their dexterity in nritta and abhinaya. So no traditional Bharatanatyam is complete without a varnam. After witnessing the brilliant performance of Shijith and Parvathi, I am in total agreement with this sentiment. However, the opponents of varnam in a Bharatanatyam has the following points: first, the varnam is too long to present (losing the attention of audience); second the lyrics of the varnam is split in order to intersperse jathis with sahitya and several long swara passages with accompanying lyrics resulting in the varnam not having a continuous thread of a narrative; third a varnam is not best suited for a group dance performance as against a solo recital. In the recent past several well recognized dancers like Padma Subramanyam showcased her Krishnaya Thubhyam Namaha (it is important to note that this was a great successful performance presented by SRUTI in 1987) which did not have a varnam. To include a (pada) varnam or not to include a varnam should be left to the choice of the performing artists as long as the artistic quality and required elements of Bharatanatyam are preserved and presented. Similarly the audience can choose what they want to see.

About the Author: Dr. P. Swaminathan is connoisseur of music and dance. He has been a past president of SRUTI. He is an ardent supporter of SRUTI. He frequently contributes to SRUTI publications.

25th Anniversary Celebrations of Sruti- A Sneak Preview

By Uma Prabhakar

The SRUTI board and membership are very excited about the 25th anniversary celebrations of SRUTI in 2011 and are gearing up to a yearful of exciting and breathtaking events we are planning to feature. We hope to break new grounds by presenting several new artists new combinations and new themes for the very first time covering a range of both carnatic and hindusthani styles representing both established and upcoming talents from India and the USA. We want 2011 to be cherished as a star-studded year and linger on as vivid memories for our membership, music and dance enthusiasts in the area as well as organizations and granters we are working with to make all this happen. The programming is still ongoing, however, I will highlight some of the anchor artists we plan to feature next year to give you all a glimpse of what to expect. We sincerely hope the programming will meet your expectations, please and stimulate your cerebral tastes and pallettes!

Amjad Ali Khan and Sons

"The sensitive fingers caress the silver strings; a shower of magical notes intoxicates the enraptured audience; music comes alive when strummed by Ustad Amjad Ali Khan."- Kavitha Chibber.



(The maestro with his two sons, Amaan and Ayaan)

Photos courtesy of John Churchville

Considered one of the 20th century's greatest masters of the Sarod, he was all of 6 years old, when Amjad Ali Khan gave his first recital of Sarod. It was the beginning of yet another glorious chapter in the history of Indian classical music. Taught by his father and guru, the great Haafiz Ali Khan of Gwalior, Amjad Ali Khan was born to the illustrious Bangash lineage rooted in the Senia Bangash School of music. Today he shoulders the sixth generation inheritance of this legendary lineage. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan has performed all over the world and has the privilege of winning highly prestigious honours and citations at a relatively young age, which, for many other artistes would have taken a lifetime. For example, he is a recipient of the UNESCO Award, Padma Vibhushan (Highest Indian civilian award), Unicef's National Ambassadorship, and many many more.

The maestro together with his two sons will delight the audiences with their soulful music and demonstrate the passing of the baton from father to sons, that latter representing the seventh generation inheritance of this delightful parampara.

S. Sowmya

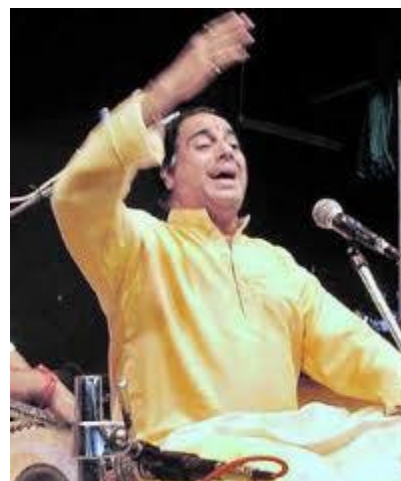
Sowmya represents the genre of pure traditional carnatic music and is considered to be one of the topmost musicians in Chennai, India, the hub of classical Carnatic music. A postgraduate in Chemistry, from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai, Sowmya opted to tread the musical path thanks to the influence of her musical family. Representing her gurus legendary musicians Dr. S. Ramanathan and Mrs. Mukta of the Brinda-Mukta duo. She has received several prestigious awards and recognitions from various state governments and the federal government of India as well as from numerous music institutions in India and cultural organizations in many countries. Additionally, she is the co-founder of [Carnatica](#), an institution dedicated to music & dance instruction, archival, talent search and other related activities. Carnatica's web portal is now a popular



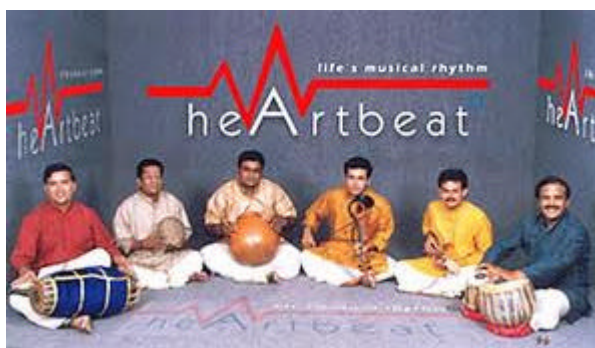
online destination for music-related information, products, courses and discussions.

T.N.Seshagopalan

Also known as Sri Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan, TNS as he is affectionately referred to, is a celebrated Carnatic musician and composer. He had his initial musical training under his mother and later from Sri. Ramanathapuram C. S. Sankarasivan. Mr. Seshagopalan holds a degree in Science from Madras University, (Madras, India) and a degree in music from Madurai University (Madurai, India). He has served as professor of music at Madurai University. He has traveled extensively, presenting vocal and veena concerts and has been the recipient of many titles and awards, recent ones being the Laya Kala Nipuna in May 2003 by the Percussion Arts Centre, Bangalore and the honor from Lalitha Kala Vedika on August 24th. A musical genius, Seshagopalan has been endowed with an enchanting and melodious voice, which has captured the heart and soul of music lovers in India and the international arena. He renders the most intricate ragas with mellow grace, subtlety and absolute ease. Seshagopalan's singing technique has the knack of transferring and communicating the most intricate musical expression with ease, simplicity and aesthetic charm. In the proposed concert, Mr. T.N. Seshagopalan will be presenting a vocal concert in the very traditional style of Carnatic Music. He will be accompanied by a violinist and a mridangam player (percussionist).



The Heartbeat Ensemble



Heartbeat is a professional musical ensemble performing Indian Classical Carnatic Music, featuring percussion accent with many dynamic performers, enchanting instruments and reverberating rhythms. Dr. 'Ghatam' Karthick takes charge of composing the pieces, while other artistes interrelate within themselves, incorporating impressive imaginations and inventive performing styles to bring a new dimension to the contemporary style of art. The Heartbeat Ensemble is very much inclined in projecting this pristine art form without compromise in traditional values of Indian rhythm diversity. The Heartbeat Ensemble effortlessly merges the harmonies of

traditional Indian Music retained deep within with the eclectic sounds of trendy rhythms. The Heartbeat Ensemble performs regularly in prestigious places effectively all over India and abroad. The ensemble's efforts have been blessed and highly praised by legendary percussionists, senior musicians, present generation stars, noted critics and both by elite & mass audience. The Heartbeat Ensemble's compositions have become popular and are also performed by other musicians and dancers. This ensemble will be presented for the first time in the Philadelphia area in collaboration with the Painted Bride theater.

TM Krishna

One of the leading vocalists in the field of Carnatic music, TM Krishna, needs no introduction to the Sruti members! Belonging to a family of music connoisseurs, he was exposed to the classical arts at a very young age and has had a very rich and intense musical training starting at the age of 6 and gave his first concert at the age of 12. He has travelled widely all over the world and performed at various national and international festivals and venues such as, The Pablo Casals festival in Prades, France, Sydney Opera House and Theatre De La Ville, Paris. Today, T.M. Krishna is viewed in the music world as a bastion of pure and quality music. He has been able to enthrall large audiences all over the world without compromising on his core values. He is innovative yet retains his musical identity, and more importantly, the honesty of Carnatic music. He has received numerous accolades and awards including the



Sangeetha Shiromani, Outstanding vocalist from the Music Academy in Chennai to name a few. He has released over 30 albums, including live concerts and thematic albums from leading labels like HMV, Music Today, Inreco, Charsur, and Rajalakshmi Audio. We anticipate this event to be yet another lively concert that will showcase TMK's virtuosity, repertoire and 'vidvath'.

Trimurti

Trimurti, a special production being commissioned specially for Sruti's anniversary celebrations, is a collaboration of three of India's major classical dance styles: Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Kathak. Performed in a set designed to replicate the interior of a temple, Trimurti will bring to the viewer the essence of dance presented as a spiritual offering, rather than a performance per se. The program, which will draw upon the repertoire structure of each of the three styles, will essentially take the audience on a journey to "Mokshya" or liberation. The aim of the performance is to bring back the essence of a sacred tradition being performed in an atmosphere of devotion for the Higher being. The pieces presented in the repertoire will be choreographed by legendary Gurus in the field (Padmabibhusan Birju Maharaj, Padmabibhusan Guru Sri Kelucharan Mohapatra, and Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale and Professor CV Chandrasekhar), as well as the dancers themselves.

Trimurti artists have all been born and raised in the US, trained extensively in the US and in India, and have established themselves as solo artists in their respective traditions. Besides teaching and performing, the artists have also choreographed their own pieces, retaining the grammar and structure of the dance tradition.

Malladi Brothers/Gundecha Brothers Jugalbandi

Malladi Brothers, Sreeram Prasad and Ravikumar, were born with a legacy and rich tradition accrued through their grand father Late Malladi Srirama Murthy and through their father, a great Harikatha exponent of his time in Andhra Pradesh. Both the brothers received musical training from their father - vocalist, Malladi Suri Babu, himself a disciple of the great Late Voleti Venkateswarulu. Sangeetha Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishnamurthy,



realizing the potential of Malladi Brothers took them under his guidance to represent his rich style of music. Malladi brothers possess a large repertoire of Carnatic compositions and possess a vibrant and powerful voice. The brothers have been the most sought after young maestros. They have traveled extensively all over India and abroad promoting and preserving the rich traditional music they represent. Malladis have several audio publications to their credit.

Gundecha Brothers, Umakant and Ramakant, are one of India's leading exponents of the Dhrupad style of Hindusthani music. Born in Ujjain in central India, they received conventional university education and learned the Dhrupad vocal art under the renowned Dhrupad vocalist Ustad Zia Fariduddin Dagar and also with Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar (the distinguished performer of Rudra Veena) in Dhrupad Kendra Bhopal. The Gundecha Brothers have sung great Hindi poetry by Tulsidas, Kabir, Padmakar, Nirala in Dhrupad style. They have recorded about 25 cassettes and CDs by H.M.V, Music Today, Rhythm House, Senseworld Music, Sundaram Records, IPPNW Concerts Berlin, Navras etc They have also sung for many television channels in India and have been broadcasted on British, U.S, German and French, Japan and Australian Radio as well. As well as being an integral part of all of India's prestigious music festivals, the Brothers have also performed at many important international music festivals and institutions in about 25 countries in Europe, U.S.A, Australia, Japan, Egypt, Singapore, Bangladesh, U.A.E and Hongkong.

For the first time, the two-brother duo's will sing together for Sruti to bring out the fine nuances of the two musical styles. The program promises to be a rare and special treat for our audiences!

Shantala Shivalingappa

Born in Madras, India, brought up in Paris, Shantala is the child of east and west. She grew up in a world filled with dance and music, initiated at a tender age by her mother, dancer Savitry Nair. Deeply moved and inspired by Master Vempati Chinna Satyam's pure and graceful style, Shantala dedicated herself to Kuchipudi, and received an intense and rigorous training from her master. Driven by a deep desire to bring Kuchipudi to the western audience, she has performed in important festivals and theaters earning praise and admiration from all. Acclaimed as a rare dancer by artists and connoisseurs the world over, Shantala combines a perfect technique with flowing grace and a very fine sensitivity. Shantala will be presented in collaboration with the Annenberg Center at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



In addition, some other programs that are being currently worked on, 2011 will also feature artists from the area (teachers included) and several new talent that is being nurtured locally. So, in summary, 2011 promises to be an extremely busy, fun-filled, traditionally enriched year showcasing the best of the best!

A final pitch and plea.....great programming always comes with a big price both in terms of resources and budgets. We are counting on each and every one of you to support and participate in the events and make the yearlong activities a grand success. Also, please provide us with your continued feedback and constructive criticisms to help us maintain the highest quality of programming.

Uma Prabhakar is a research scientist in Life Sciences and has been closely associated with Sruti since its inception in 1986. Her interests include music, writing and, cooking. She is the 2010 Sruti President elect.

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NEWS AND NOTES.....

Awards and Celebrations

- J. Vaidhyathan, no stranger to Sruti, was awarded the coveted 'Isai Peroli' title by the Kartik Fine Arts Sabha. Vaidhyathan, in his acceptance speech took the audience to the times when he was not even in his teens, when his father, the great D. K. Jayaraman used to wake him up at 4 a.m. and put him through practice for 3 to 4 hours; times when his father discussed the kutcheris of the great musicians of that time and educated his son on the music of the mridangist in the concert he had attended that evening.

-ABHAI (Association of Bharata Natyam Artistes of India), founded in 1987 by late Guru KN Pakkirisamy Pillai, has been honoring renowned Gurus/artistes in the field of Bharatanatyam each year. This year's recipient of the prestigious Natya Kalanidhi award is Bharatanatyam Guru Adyar K. Lakshmanan.

-On December 11, 2010, Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Chennai honours Mohiniattom dancer Gopika Varma with the NRITHYA CHOODAMANI AWARD and Bharatanatyam dancer Radhika Shurajit with the ACHARYA CHOODAMANI AWARD on the inaugural day of the 55th Art and Dance Festival. .

Obituary Notes

- Senior Carnatic music flute artiste Sikkil Kunjumani passed away in Mylapore, Chennai on Saturday, November 13. She was the elder of the well-known duo, the Sikkil Sisters, flautists. She was 83. Sikkil Kunjumani learnt her first lessons in playing the flute from her uncle Azhiyur Narayanaswamy Iyer and later, from her father Azhiyur Natesa Iyer, who was a reputed mridangam artiste and guru. Once she gained competency, she began to perform on stage and was one of the few women to do so at a time when women were not encouraged as public performers. She used to play solo and her career encouraged other women to pursue music and also to become concert artists. Later she and her sister Neela performed as a duo; the Sikkil Sisters became a permanent fixture on the concert circuit. They were known for their mellifluous rendering of music. Kunjumani was decorated with the Padma Shri award and with the Sangita Kalanidhi title among other honors during her long career. The sisters continued to perform despite advancing age.

<http://www.thehindu.com/arts/music/article884354.ece>

- One of the foremost exponents of Odissi and mardala and the Founder-Director of Konark Natya Mandap (in Konark) and Orissa Dance Academy (in Bhubaneswar), Guru Gangadhar Pradhan passed away on October 11, 2010 in Bhubaneswar. He was 62. Guru Gangadhar Pradhan's training began at the age of six at Balunkeswar temple in Puri District, Orissa to mature as a gotipua dancer. He mastered the delicate nuances and the subtleties of the Odissi dance form from Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra. He founded the Konark Natya Mandap in 1986, with the aim to make Konark a centre to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Orissa. He received the State Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1993), Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1998), Padma Shri (2008) and was a visiting faculty at Cornell University, USA.

The Chennai Music Season 2010:

The season is on full swing! Some of us get to immerse ourselves in the Chennai "season" in person- sabha hopping with the best of the Chennai-ites. Then there are a few of us that end up participating in the "season" vicariously from a great distance. There are a number of resources for the folks in the second category. Some of these are listed below:

<http://www.musicacademymadras.in/home.php>

<http://www.kutcheribuzz.com/decseason2009/>

<http://narthaki.com/index.html>

<http://artindia.net/madras09/news.html>

<http://www.kalakshetra.in/>

<http://www.hindu.com/ms/index.htm>

<http://indian-heritage.org/musicseason/index.html>

Saint Thyagaraja Aradhana in Thiruvaiyaru; Jan 2011

The 2011 aradhana will begin on Jan.21 and go on till Jan.25. Bahula panchami falls on Jan.24, the day the saint composer is said to have attained mukti. On that day, artists join in to sing the Pancharatna kritis at the samadhi in the morning.

Some of the 2011 Thyagaraja Aradhana events in North America:

March 19,20 Sruti- The India Music and Dance Society, the Greater Philadelphia Region.

April 21-May 1 Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana

www.aradhana.org



SRUTI

The India Music & Dance Society
3055 Highley Road,
Audubon, PA 19403



SRUTI

The India Music and Dance Society

www.sruti.org

