

Review of 1994 SRUTI Concerts

**Chitraveena by a Virtuoso
May 8, 1994**

Sumathi Sarangan

RaviKiran is "the name" most people associate with the Gottuvadyam - now renamed by RaviKiran as "Chitraveena". This young man makes an immediate impression with his charismatic stage presence. His ability to develop that special rapport with his audience and his accompanists is refreshingly uncommon.

SRUTI had the pleasure of organizing RaviKiran's concert on the 8th of May 1994. At this concert, he was ably accompanied by SundarRajan on violin and Vellore Ramabhadran on the mridangam.

RaviKiran opened the concert with a brisk rendering of "Gajavadhana", which was a Papanasam Sivan composition set in SriRanjani ragam, followed by "Shobillu", a Thyagaraja composition in JaganMohini ragam which set the mood for the rest of the concert. He then played "Sevikka Vendum Ayya" in Andolika ragam by Muthu Thandavar with effortless ease.

His Thodi alapana, though disappointingly short was well compensated by the perfectly and beautifully played "Rave Himagiri Kumari", one of the rare Swarajathis of Shyama Sastri's.

Next, he gave a quick and crisp version of "Bantureethi Koluviyyavayya" in Hamsanadam before he went on to delight us with a scintillating alapana in Shankarabharanam

and an another Thyagaraja krithi, "Endhuku Bethala". He even sidestepped the norm and played Kadhanakuthuhalam after Shankarabharanam just to graciously please a fan who requested "Raghu Vamsa Sudha".

His RTP in Varali was outstanding in its totality. He played it out as Pancha Gana Raga Pallavi, meaning Varali followed by Nattai, Gowlai, Arabhi, and SriRagam. He even joyfully went on to sing the pallavi for his audience in his cultured voice showing his other talent as a vocalist.

After the emotionally fulfilling RTP he slowly brought them down by giving them the ever popular melodies "Enna Thavam Seidanai", "Venkata Chala Nilayam", and a "Dhaneshri" thillana which most everyone enjoyed.

The lilting Brindavana Saranga was a jewel in the crown. His extraordinary panache for individuality was demonstrated even in the concluding Mangalam. It was over, all too soon, leaving the audience hankering for more.

Delhi SundarRajan, a young and very promising violinist was a superb match for young RaviKiran swaram for swaram and sangathi for sangathi. He also showed precision and finesse in his execution of kalpana swarams and alapanas.

Vellore Ramabhadran as always was in his element and was very supportive in his accompaniment. He never fails his audience and played thaniavarthanam exemplarily. All in all, this particular concert was one of the most memorable ones last year. We hope to see more of the same this year.

Sumathi Sarangan is very interested in Carnatic Music and has given vocal performances. She also teaches Carnatic Music to several students in the Philadelphia area.