



**SRI PARTHASARATHY SWAMI SABHA**

Email : [parthasabha@gmail.com](mailto:parthasabha@gmail.com)

<http://sriparthasarathyswamisabha.com/>

● Volume: 6 ● Issue: 2

**Dec.20 2019**

● For Private Circulation Only



**SANGEETH  
SARATHY**



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*Wishing Sabhas, Artistes and Rasikas a Memorable Season*



## The music that is timeless

When the veteran is on the dais, the audience cannot be left with anything but a grand concert. It happened in the concert of Prof. T.N. Krishnan accompanied by his son Sriram Krishnan, Bombay Balaji on the mridangam and Vaikom Gopalakrishnan on the ghatam held on December 17, 2019.

Starting the concert traditionally with a varnam in Mohanam, a short Purvikalyani alapana and 'jnaana mosaga rada' came quickly. The Huseni raga alapana that followed could be academically enriching for any music student. The master brought out the essence of the raga from the first phrase and a wholesome alapana was completed within a few strokes. 'Rama ninne namminaanu' of Thyagaraja was the kriti he presented.



A slow and folksy Yadukulakambodhi was yet another delight. 'Hecharikaga rara' in Jhampa tala was presented in its pristine form. It was then time for TNK's timeless Kapi raga rendition. 'Inta saukhyamani ne' and the pleasing swara kalpanas in keezhkaalam transported the audience to the bygone years. The well structured tani by Bombay Balaji and Vaikom Gopalakrishnan that suited the maestro's kala pramanam was very enjoyable. TNK then chose to play Tiruppavai in Behag, 'Oruthi Maganai pirandu' for Margazhi.

A brisk Tillana in Jonsपुरi displayed the excellent mastery he has on the instrument and the experience of playing it for decades. Yet another masterpiece 'Sri Venkatagirisam' in Suruti surprised the audience after the thillana. He wound up the concert to a standing ovation by the audience. The concert could arguably be one of the memorable concerts for many who were present on that day.

- Revathi R

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**G**rand inauguration of 119th year Isai Vizha on December 15, 2019. His Holiness Srividya Paramahansa Appan Parakala Ramanuja Embar Jeer Swamigal, Sriperumbudur inaugurated. Awardees Prof. T.N. Krishnan, Dr. T.V. Gopalakrishnan, Guruvayur Dorai, Vikku Vinayakram, Allam Durgaprasad, M.A. Krishnaswamy, Dr. Rajkumar Bharathi and J.A. Jayanth with the Sabha president Dr. Nalli Kuppswami Chetty and Sabha secretaries Dr. Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman and Dr. S. Sowmya felicitated the awardees.



Auspicious beginning of the evening session with Namasankeerthanam by Sengottai Hari Bhagavathar and group.



Inaugural concert by Dr. Sudha Raja's Sargam Choir group, who presented Thyagaraja's Divyanama kritis and other Bhajans.



# STAMP OF CLASSICISM

**B**riskily paced kritis presented in ragas with considerably varying flavours gave a racy start to the concert of Malladi Brothers, testifying to the careful planning which had gone behind the programme. The first four ragas presented in the concert, Anandha Bhairavi, Begada, Asaveri and Subha Pantuvarali sported widely diverse colours as they belong to four different chakras of the melakartha chart. The Relatively lesser known kritis, 'Samayamu Thelisi' of Thyagaraja in Asaveri, 'Pasupateeswaram' of Dikshitar in Subha Pantuvarali (Siva Pantuvarali in the 'asampoorna' system of raga classification followed by Dikshitar), 'Kadaikann Parvaiyadhu Podume' of Papanasam Sivan in Khamas and 'Nee Vanti Dheivamu', of Thyagaraja in praise of Lord Muruga in Thodi, presented by the brothers would have been a welcome to those who look for novelty and enrichment of knowledge.

Starting the concert with the kriti, 'Neeke Theliyakapothe' of Thyagaraja in Ananda Bhairavi would have been a surprise for rasikas who expect a varnam or a kriti in praise of Lord Vinayaka at the beginning. They came up with two well known kritis 'Sankari Neevani' of Subbaraya Sastri in Begada, with spectacularly structured chitta swara sahityam and the soaring



'Thulasi Bilva' of Thyagaraja in Kedara Gowla, sung as the main piece, catering to the palate of all classes of listeners.

Telugu being their mother tongue and with a pedigree going back to stalwarts, like, Sripada Pinakapani, Voleti Venkateswarulu and Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, the brothers possess an enviable repertoire of Telugu kritis, particularly those of Thyagaraja, Annamacharya and Bhadrachala Ramadass. The powerful voice of Malladi brothers makes their alapanas enjoyable. The alapanas of Begada and Siva Pantuvarali by Ravikumar and Kedaragowla by Sreeramprasad left nothing to be desired.

The proficiency of Malladi in the kritis of Annamacharya and Bhadrachala Ramadass is well known. 'Oka Parikokapari Oyyaramai' of Annamacharya in Kharaharapriya made familiar to music

lovers by M.S. Subbulakshmi many years back, was a welcome rendition in the post main session. 'Balira Vairagyamentho Bagaiyunnadhi' of Bhadrachala Ramadass, which they said, was set to tune by their father Suri Babu in the ragam, Kalavathi.

Special mention must be made of the violin support rendered by Nishanth Chandran, a disciple of A. Kanyakumari. With spectacular raga essays and swara renderings, he won the hearts of the rasikas K.V.Prasad, a well decorated artist and a versatile mridangist who is equally adept in playing other percussion instruments and Trichy Krishnaswamy, one of the much sought-after ghatam artists, did their best to further enhance the quality of the concert.

- V. Mohan



The old world charm with modern approach was evident in the vocal concert of the veteran Dr. T.V. Gopalakrishnan.

S. Varadarajan, his disciple accompanies him on the violin and another multifaceted artiste, Vijay Natesan was on the mridangam. On December 15, 2019 at 4.30 pm.





Sangeetha Kalasarathy A. Kanyakumari along with her disciple Nishanth Chandran presented a melodious and a scholarly violin concert on December 16, 2019. Patri Satishkumar's brilliant stokes added beauty to the concert.



Tiruvarur Girish performed a concert, rich in tradition, on December 16, 2019. A remarkable Kalyani raga alapana stood out with another equally brilliant Kharaharapriya. The senior musicians Nagai Muralidharan on the violin, Tiruvarur Bakthavatsalam on the mridangam and V.Suresh on the ghatam enhanced the feel of experience at the concert.



Veena Venkatramani, a disciple of J.T. Jeyaraaj Krishnan and Jaysri Jeyaraaj Krishnan, presented a neat and pleasant veena concert with Ashwini Srinivasan on the mridangam and Sivaramakrishna on the kanjira, on December 16, 2019. A notable sahitya bhavam prevailed through the concert.



Shubashree Ramachandran's delightful concert took place on December 16, 2019. With a consistent energy flowing through the concert, there was no dull moment. M. Vijay on the violin, Kalidaikurichi Sivakumar on the mridangam and H. Sivaramakrishnan on the ghatam ably supported her.





# Pallavi - the highlight of the concert

Kalyanapuram S. Aravind did not venture to pack many compositions into his two - hour concert on December 17, 2019. Instead he chose to take up grand kritis with beautiful alapanas tracing the nuances of each of the ragas.

Presenting Mayamalavagowla in a relaxed pace, Aravind rendered 'Meru samana' precisely. Suruti alapana came with all its grandeur. Aravind has a voice that traverses across octaves with a consistent quality. The brigas and long korvais add to the presentation. Prefixing with a slokam, Aravind took up 'Angarakam ashrayamyaham' the vara kriti of Dikshitar

for Tuesday. With niraval in the line 'Deena rakshakam' he proceeded with kalpanaswaram in two kaalams elaborately. What followed was a moving Subhapanthavarali ragam and a pallavi skillfully decorated. Being a raga that evokes the feel of pathos, Aravind's presentation was poignant. He concluded the concert with 'Krishna naama rasana',

a Surdas bhajan, which his guru Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan often rendered in Ragesri.

B. Ananthakrishnan on the violin, Vijay Ganesh on the mridangam and Nerkunam Sankar on the mridangam contributed considerably to embellish the concert.

- Revathi R



## Double Delight



A unique concert of two renowned artistes, N. Ravikiran on the Chitravina and Dr. L. Shankar on the double-violin was a delight to Chennai rasikas. On December 15, 2019 at 6.45 pm. The maestros came together with their 20 stringed Nava Chitravina and 10 stringed double Violin and presented an evening of beautiful music. The percussionists Haridwaramangalam A. K. Pazhanivel on the Taval and Shree Sundar

Kumar on the Kanjira added more glitter to the concert.

The concert did begin with the Sahana Varnam 'Karunimpa', but the raga delineations by both Ravikiran and Shankar was a beautiful prelude. Shanmukhapriya and Dikshitar's 'Siddhi Vinayakam' got a fine treatment with much creativity by the artistes. They took up 'Tolijenma' in

Bilahari after the alapana that received thunderous applause. After a lovely line up of compositions in Bahudari, Kalyani and Kapi, the duo presented a piece in the raga Savithri, composed by L. Shankar. The folksy composition with ragamalika improvisations played by artistes taking turns, was a completely different experience in a Carnatic concert.

- Revathi R



# Display of proficiency

**K**. Gayatri is one of the young vocalists, who have in the recent years, come up fast to rightfully occupy the forefront in the concert circuit. A disciple of Late Suguna Purushottaman, a well respected musician, composer and teacher, Gayatri, aided by a rich voice, has developed an individual style of her own in rendering kritis and manodharma sangeetham, making her concerts enjoyable.

Gayatri chose to render popular kritis as the main offerings 'Sari Evvaramma' after a well structured raga essay in Bhairavi was the main piece. This exquisitely beautiful kriti of Syama Sastri in the rare Kanda Jhampa thalam, with a breathtaking chittaswaram and a magnificent chittaswara sahityam, was decorated fittingly by Gayatri with niraval and kalpana swarams at the start of the charanam 'Madhava Sodhari'. The other familiar but grand kritis sung by Gayatri were 'Rangapura Vihara' of Dikshitar in Brindavana Saranga, 'Vidhulakumrokkedha' and 'Srikantha Neeyeda' of Thyagaraja in Mayamalavagowla and Bhavapriya (Prati madyama counterpart of Thodi) respectively and 'Kadaikann Vaithennai Alamma' of Ramasamy Sivan in Begada. Gayatri prefixed the kriti briefly with a satisfying alapana of Begada and showcased her swara singing skills by appending swaras



alternately at 'Santhatham' at the start of the charanam and 'Gowri Rajarajeswari' in the pallavi. Another instance where Gayatri's proficiency could be seen was the niraval exercise done at 'Kamala Gowri Vageeswari Vidhi' in the krithi 'Vidulaku' supported by attractive swara korvais.

In the post main phase, Gayatri rendered a not-so-often sung but moving kriti of Papanasam Sivan 'Ramanai Bajitthal Noi Vinai Theerum' in Maand. She did not forget to welcome the month of Margazhi which started on that day, with the first pasuram of Andal and wrapped up her concert with a catchy thillana of her guru on Lord Muruga in Ranjani.

Poongulam Subramanian, son of Poongulam Sabesa Iyer, a pioneer of the

Tiruvarur bani of mridangam playing and a disciple of Srimushnam Raja Rao, as also a much sought after mridangist and Chandrasekara Sharma, the well accomplished nephew of the legendary ghatam player, T.H. Vinayakram, on the ghatam, gave eminent percussion support to the vocalist and their thani, though brief was memorable. All through the thani, Gayatri did not remove her cheerful eye contact from the percussionists, a very good quality for a vocalist, not seen in everyone. B.U Ganesh Prasad, a highly talented violinist, fully supported the main artiste without detracting from his reputation as a well respected solo player and a reputed vocalist.

- V Mohan



Vocalist S. Saketharaman, mridangam vidwan K. Arun Prakash and Kanjira artiste K.V. Gopalakrishnan took the topic - CARNATICS - Carnatic Music, Maths and presented an academically interesting lecture-demonstration giving away many tips for performing artistes.





# Context and Relevance of Group Kritis

Mambalam sisters supported by Dr T.R. Aravind presented a well researched lecture demonstration on key aspects of group kritis of Thyagaraja and Dikshitar. They also dealt with some aspects of group kritis of some other composers. At the outset, Mambalam Sisters said that it should not be thought that in all cases of group kritis, the grouping was done by the composer himself. In many cases, the grouping was done by the disciples of the composers or others, much later. For example, the Pancharatna kritis of Thyagaraja were brought under a group in the 1940s, long after the time of the composer. Even the swarajathis of Syama Sastri were not sung as a group by the composer. On the other hand, Koteeswara Iyer has composed a group of kritis called 'Kanda Ganamudham', in all the 72 melakarthis and all these kritis carry his mudra, 'Kavi Kunjara' and the name of the raga concerned.

The team made references to the navarathri kritis and utsava sampradaya kritis by Swati Tirunal, were sung during his time itself and 'Sri Guruguha Navaratna Malika' by the Tanjore quartet on their guru. In the post trinity period, 'Chamundeswari Ashtotra Shada' kritis and 'Siva Ashtotra Shada' kritis by Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar, using new ragas like, Haripriya, Tiruvotriyur Thyagarajar's 108 kritis on Lord Krishna, some in new ragas, like Lokaranjani and Kanakakusumavali were also discussed.

Oothukadu Venkata Kavi's 'Kamakshi Navavarnam', where the name of the chakra and the 'Beejakshara' are incorporated, came as a point of reference. Dikshitar's Navavarana kritis also have the



same order of chakras as the Oothukadu kritis, making one ask a question, whether Oothukadu Kavi inspired Dikshitar or vice versa. Another group 'Saptha Ratnam' of Oothukadu Kavi with the structure is similar in all kritis but are on different deities. However, he is not known to have intended to compose the kritis as a group, the team said. Mambalam sisters sang a few lines of a kriti in Ananda Bhairavi starting as 'Yoga Yogeswari', forming part of this group.

Considering the earliest group kritis, Rama Matyar in his Swaramela Kalanidhi (1558 AD) has said that he made a set of five prabandams. Others were Sharajit Maharaja of Punjab (Pancharatna Prabandam) for dance purpose, Kshetraraya (Vijayaraghava Pancha Kavyam) and Karveti Nagar Govindasamy Ayya (Pancharatna Varnams). Mambalam sisters shared the stories of Thyagaraja's Srirangam, Lalgudi and Kovur Pancharatna kritis.

Turning to Dikshitar kritis, Aravind said that the lecdem dealt with only those kritis (numbering 230) named in the Sangeetha Sampradaya Pradarsini (SSP) of Subbarama Dikshitar, though there are many kritis outside SSP. He mentioned all eight Guruguha Vibakthi Kritis, seven

Navagraha Kritis (Aravind said that the other two were not composed by Dikshitar), nine Kamalamba Navavarana Kritis (excluding the Dhayana and Mangala kritis) and seven Thyagesa vibhakthi kritis, except the one in Rudrapriya, though not mentioned that these are vibhakthi kritis, similar to panchabootha kritis, not mentioned as a group. As regards the Shodasa Ganapathi kritis, a mention is found under the Vaggeyakara

Charitram, but there is no mention in the kritis themselves, he said. Incidentally, it cannot be said that Dikshitar was the first to compose vibhakthi (declension in English or vetrumai in Tamil) kritis. There was one, Upanishad Bramendral, a contemporary of Dikshitar, but much older than him, who wrote commentary on all the 108 upanishads and he is believed to have made vibhakthi kritis. In the case of Abhayamba and Neelotpalamba vibhakthi kritis, only a few kritis find mention in SSP, he said. Dikshitar's five kritis on Goddess Meenakshi are known, four of which are in prati madhyama ragas, though in general, only suddha madhyama ragas are predominant in group kritis. Thyagaraja has also made kritis on sage Naradha, Thulasi, sangeetha sastram and Navarasas.

The vidwans who delivered the lecture appeared to have taken enormous pains to come out with a thoroughly researched work. The lecture was rendered in a structured manner and was full of useful information not only on group kritis but also on many other aspects relating to the kritis of Thyagaraja and Dikshitar. Demonstrative singing made wherever necessary, was enjoyable.

- V Mohan



S.R. Eshwar, a budding vocalist presented an impressive concert on December 17, 2019 with Priyamvada Sastri on the violin and Aaduturai Guruprasad on the mridangam





Sheritalai Dr. K.N. Renganatha Sharma presented kritis of a variety of composers in his concert on December 17, 2019.

The audience lapped up a beautiful Bilahari, the kriti 'Dorakuna ituvanti seva' and the RTP in Kharaharapriya that were presented well, bringing out the essence of the ragas and without deviating from classicism.

Mysore Srikanth on the violin, B. Harikumar on the mridangam and Vaikom Gopalakrishnan on the ghatam made a good team for a bright concert.



## CARNATIQUIZ!

Do you know ?

1. Who has set the tune for Bhajare Yadhu Nadam a composition by Sadasiva Brahmendrar?
2. An instrument which is named after its inventor?
3. Who composed Karuani Deivame Karpagame?
4. “குறுகிய ஸ்வரத்துக்குள்ளே குவலயம் படைத்துப் போனான்” Who has said this about whom?
5. Two people who had set Tirukkural to music?

- Contributed by S. Sivakumar



### EDITORIAL TEAM

S. Sivakumar | R. Revathi | V. Mohan

**Photos:**  
Lingan Studios Shankar

**Layout & Design:**  
Fairy M

1. Semmangudi
2. Saxophone, Adolphe Sax
3. Madurai T Srinivasan (Seena Kutty)
4. It is about T N Rajarathnam Pillai by Kaviyarasu Kannadasan
5. V.V. Sadagopan and T. M. Thiagarajan

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