



SRI PARTHASARATHY SWAMI SABHA

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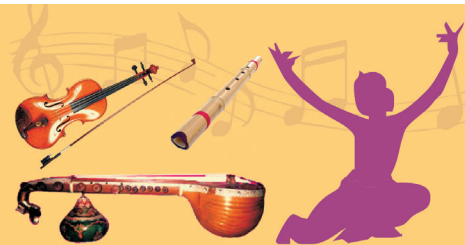
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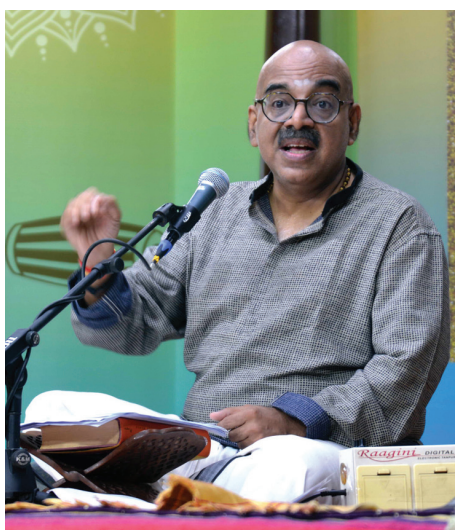
Shri Mohan Kurup

MUSICAL ALCHEMY

Dr. Sriram Parasuram Unravels Muttuswamy Dikshitar's Madhyama Kala Sahitya Mastery

Dr. Sriram Parasuram delved into the captivating realm of "Madhyama Kala Sahitya in Muttuswamy Dikshitar Krithis" during his enlightening lecture demonstration. The concept of Madhyama Kala Sahitya revolves around sections within Carnatic kritis composed at twice the fundamental tempo. Typically situated at the conclusion of the Anupallavi or the Charanam, Muthuswamy Dikshitar, a virtuoso in this domain, often incorporated these sections into many of his compositions.

Sriram meticulously unveiled various pieces from Dikshitar's repertoire, illustrating the maestro's prowess in alliterations, poetic richness, syllabic beauty, rhythmic enchantment, virtuosity, mirroring symmetry, and rhythmic orientation within the Madhyama Kala sections. Dikshitar's intentional emphasis on the focused singing of these sections not only showcased his compositional finesse but also served as a means for



enthusiasts to grasp the essence of the ragas. This unique approach enabled Dikshitar to codify several ragas in his krithis.

Examples such as 'Srinathathi Guruguho' in Mayamalavagowli, 'Siddhi Vinayakam' in Shanmukhapriya, 'Mahaganapathim' in Nattai, "Srimahaganapathim" in Gowli, and "Vallaba" in Begada were skillfully presented during the demonstration, igniting a deeper interest among the audience to analyze these compositions more profoundly in the future. The lecture also provided an opportunity for attendees to acquaint themselves with rare ragas like Choodamani, Rama Kali, Naga Gandhari, Dhavalanghi and Kumudhakriya.

In essence, the lecture demonstration proved to be not only informative and entertaining but also transformative, offering a fresh perspective on Dikshitar's compositions and paving the way for a richer understanding of his musical genius in the times to come.

... **SUNDARARAMAN CHINTAMANI**

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Inauguration of 123rd year's Isai Vizha of Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha



Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha inaugurated its memorable 123rd year's December Music Festival in a grand manner yesterday on 15.12.2023. His Holiness Srirangam Srimath Andavan Sri Varaha Maha Desikan Swamigal's benign presence at the venue filled the air around with religious significance. It was always customary for this sabha to be blessed by a Swamigal of this holy order every year on its commencing day. He was given a traditional welcome as he entered the sabha's premises, at Vidya Bharathi, at Bheemasena Garden Road in Mylapore, Chennai.

Traditional Mangala Isai was given by Asthana Vidwan of Mylai Kapaleeswarar Temple, Sembanarkoil Vidwan S R G S Mohandas and party at 4.30 p.m. Earlier Pooja was conducted in the morning at around 10 a.m.

Conferring the awards on the various artistes who were on stage, Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti, President of this sabha, in his speech meticulously extolled each one of the award winners. His interesting anecdotal address was uttered in an endearing manner. Senior vidwans on stage, viz. Tiruchi Sankaran, Neyveli Santhanagoplan and popular artiste Smt. Nithyasree Mahadevan, felicitating the awardees, shared the experiences they have had with each one of the vidwans on stage and brought out how each one of them always gave their human touch under all circumstances. Dr. Nandini Azad, Chairman, Vidya Bharathi Trust, lighted the Kuthuvilakku. In carrying out this holy function all artistes on stage, other functionaries and the office-bearers of the sabha joined her.

Senior vidwan Sri Umayalpuram Sivaraman and Vidushi Smt. Sudha Ragunathan made their august presence at the function.

The awards bestowed were the following: "Sangeetha Kalasarathy" on Violin Maestro Sri. Nagai R. Muralidharan, Palghat Mani Iyer Centenary award to Mridangam Maestro Dr. Yella Venkateshwara Rao, "Partha Acharya Puraskar" Award to Vainika, Guru & Musicologist Dr. R.S. Jayalakshmi, Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar Award for Musical Excellence to Ghatam Maestro Dr. Suresh Vaidyanathan, Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu Award to Violin Vidwan Sri. Vittal Ramamurthy, G. Ramanathan Award to Media Fame, Producer, Arts Curator. Smt. Subhasree Thanickachalam, Dr. M.L.V. Award to Sri. Kalyanapuram S. Aravind and Sri. Vittal Rangan.

Andavan Sri Varaha MahaDesikan Swamigal was apt to

All the awardees, Sabha's executive committee members and senior musicians who felicitated the awardees with Srirangam Srimad Andavan Sri Varaha Mahadesikan Swamigal



Welcome address by Sabha's secretary Sri M. Krishnamurthy



Sri Nagai R. Muralidharan receiving Sangeetha Kalasarathy award

add his remarks and gave his additive voice whenever the speakers touched on a topic that clinched his interest. Later he blessed all those in the gathering with a speech that held the audience spellbound and was marked by his wisdom gathered over years of experience.



Presidential address by Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti

Sri M. Krishnamurthy, Secretary of the Sabha read out the citations before each award was given and also gave a speech to welcome the gathering. Vidwan K.N. Shashikiran was the able compeer, who related his talk to that of the previous speaker with an element of rare sagacity.

This function will be cherished for long in the manner it was conducted for years to come!

Swara and Laya based korvais

The lecture-demonstrations at Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha during the December Music Festival are a big draw of music students as well as common rasikas.

Thoughtfully conceptualised by Vidwan K.N. Shashikiran, these lect-demos are presented by senior vidwans and also by brilliant young musicians. The first in this year's lect-demo series was by the versatile young musicians Kunnakudi M. Balamuralikrishna with Akkarai Sornalatha and B. Sreesundarkumar. All three artistes play another instrument apart from what they are well-known for!

The topic for the day was 'Structuring Aesthetic swara/laya based korvais'. The team took turns showing the rhythmic syllables for the swaras presented during the kalpanaswaram segment while rendering a kriti. How does a musician make these structures without monotony setting in? The miniature korvais helps at these times, the team revealed. Sornalatha's trishthayi korvai example to the perfect accompaniment of



Sreesundarkumar's mridangam was interesting.

This well-attended morning session set the mood for the season of a series of lectures and concerts at the Sabha.



Gayathri Venkataraghavan's soulful rendition

Beginning her concert with 'Sri Ganapathini' in Sourashtram, Gayathri sang the second Thiruppavai in Gowlai for the day. The placid presentation of

'Seshachala Nayakam' in Varali was followed by a brilliant 'Natakurinji alapana and her soulful rendition of Swati Tirunal's Navarathri krithi 'Pahi Janani' in Nattakurinji stood out.

Lalitha in RTP! And the lyrics 'Lalithe vinuthe mam paahi bhagavathi jayati jagat janani' was so comforting that Gayathri took the audience to a blissful listening experience.

Viruttam singing is yet another forte of Gayathri. Her culminating pieces including 'Andavan Dharisaname' were gratifying.



After the inauguration of the 123rd year music festival, Vidya Bharathi hall reverberated with the vibrant Bhajan Sandhya by Vidwan O.S. Arun and his team comprising of Karaikal Venkatasubramanian (Violin), M.S. Venkatasubramanian (Mridangam), Martin (Tabla), S. Venkatraman (Harmonium) and Selvam (Thalam). The audience enjoyed the bright music rendered with bhakthi.

Jayashree Vaidyanathan's concert was traditional vocal concert that displayed her flair for good music. Accompanying her were vidwans Durai Srinivasan (Violin), Manikkudi S. Chandrasekar (Mrudangam) and H Sivaramakrishnan (Ghatam)



Akshay Padmanabhan presented a lively concert with choice compositions and a Ragam Tanam Pallavi in Shanmukhapriya with pallavi line 'Parthasarathy undhan padame gathi'. He presented a grand Shyama Sastri kriti 'Palimchu Kamakshi' in Madhyamavathi as the main number of the concert.

In the photo: Akshay Padmanabhan (Vocal), Sahana Vasudevan (Violin), Sunaada Krishna (Mrudangam), Shivaramakrishnan (Kanjira)

Vintage brilliance

Veteran musicians will always display their class. And that is a treat to enjoy. As 'Ranganathude' rolled out, it meant business from the word go. The Saurashtram kriti was rendered with much gait and rigour by the vidwan who happens to share his name with the lord of Srirangam.

Sherthalai Renganatha Sharma was in top form and next came a racy 'pAhi sripathe' in Hamsadwani. A brisk round of swarms that followed had befitting responses from L Ramakrishnan. Mannargudi Eswaran and Vaikom Gopalakrishnan were in their elements and showed their class in accompanying the fast-paced kriti and the swarms that followed.

Renganatha Sharma showed a distinct and new flavour in Sahana. The rAga alapanai was a gradual elaboration going

through many rare sancharams. L Ramakrishnan gave a classic follow-up. Papanasam Sivan's pleading kriti 'Chitham irangadadhenayya' was presented in a matching mood and kalpanaswarams followed.

Kalyani is a vast rAga. It can be shown in many styles. This day, it was a grand alapanai in a classical manner. On a roll, phrase after phrase, it was just brilliance as Renganatha Sharma and then Ramakrishnan showcased a madisar clad Kalyani. 'Nija dasa varadha' was taken up and presented with a befitting grandeur, with elaborate neraval and kalpana swarms at the anupallavi line, with the senior vidwans Eswaran and Gopalakrishnan providing sensitive and enjoyable accompaniment. An elaborate Tani avarthanam followed involving multiple nadais and a very beautiful korvai.

With vara rAga laya as an interlude before Kalyani and a Swati thirunal kriti after, he chose to end his concert with a moving rendition of the Kuriinji padam 'aliveni'.

A Veteran on stage is a delight to the Rasika. A team of Veterans meant a concert of the highest quality and a high level of contentment to those who were present.

... R BHARATHWAJ



Star performance

A popular artiste's performance always keeps the crowd engaged. As the curtains rolled up, Sudha Ragunathan was present akin to a reigning queen, which she undoubtedly is.

Starting with the Andholika varnam, 'nee daya Radha', the mood was set. A brisk presentation of Swati Tirunal's 'kama janaka' in Gaula with fast-paced swarams followed.

Malayamarutham was the first major rAgam for the evening. It was an elaborate alapanai by her and by Embar Kannan who accompanied her on the violin. Various facets of the rAgam were showcased with many magical moments. She presented 'ManasaAetulo' of Thyagaraja with sparkling nerval and swarams at 'kalilo rAjasa tamasa'.

Arunachala kavi's Rama Nataka keerthanai 'Kanden kanden' in Vasanta was rendered in a gripping manner, with one rasikas even noting that the vocalist found a matching mood in the violinist on this occasion.

The main rAgam taken for elaboration was tODi. It was a grand and elaborate affair. Many classical phrases intermingled with catchy and glittering phrases, it was a wonderful sight to watch when audience was mesmerised. Kannan, in his turn, gave a slightly crisp and befitting response. 'Jesinadhella marachitivo' was neatly presented with its nicely built set of sangatis. Neraval and swarams at 'Rama thyagaraja prema', showed her style in its best form. Many intricate vyavaharams were interwoven into a colourful garland of swarams. Both the alapanai and swarams also displayed sruthi bheda, making it enjoyable for the full house. Nanjil Arul on the mridangam and Sowmyanarayanan on the Ghatam handled the percussion department with gripping accompaniment to both kalpita and manodarma parts.



When a superstar takes the stage, she ensures to show her command. Even to make an interrupting announcement, she showed her humor sense and wit with much ease, leaving the entire audience in splitting laughter for a few moments. Such was the concert experience, which made most Rasikas satisfied with a well-spent Sunday evening.

... R BHARATHWAJ

Abhishek Ravishankar's rendition of a beautiful alapana of Hindolam was a testament to his lively concert. Saketha Pantula on the Violin and Adarsh Devarajan on the Mrudangam provided able support.



Sri Sri Sisters, Sriya and Sreeja in their lively concert did full justice to the scale of Sankarabharanam, embellishing it with all those subtle nuances this raga affords. Their crowning piece was a Balamurali Thillana in Kunthalavarali. Their brisk renditions with other young artistes, Parur Ananthalakshmi(violin) and Pazhani Balaj (Mrudangam), an able disciple of the maestro Thiruvarur Bhakthavathsalam on the Mrudangam were spirited and energetic.

... Inputs S SIVAKUMAR

Utmost devotion and technical brilliance

Kalyanapuram S. Aravind is one of the brightest young stars in the firmament of contemporary Carnatic music. Aravind makes it amply apparent that he was groomed carefully by his legendary guru, Vidwan Sri T. N. Seshagopalan. The decision of the Sabha to give away the prestigious Dr. MLV Award for the year 2023 to Aravind (and Vidwan Vittal Rangan) is testimony, inter-alia, to his skill to blend tradition and innovation in a balanced manner. Endowed with a versatile voice, Aravind shows equal ease in handling both Kalpita and Manodharma music.

“Karthikeya Gangeya Gauri thanaya”, a composition by Papanasam Sivan was the high point of Aravind’s concert. This kriti, which in its grandeur matches some of the major kritis of the Trinity, was sung by Aravind with the utmost devotion and technical brilliance that it demands. The kriti was preceded by an alapana which contoured the majesty of Thodi. This kriti has more than one place for singing niraval and swaras and Aravind chose to do so at “Vel Maruvum Amalakara Kamala”. Some more sangatis could have been sung at “Maal Maruga Shanmuga Muruga Guha”, for which Aravind is eminently capable, but he was conscious of time constraints.

The concert began with ‘Vanjakshi’, the majestic Kalyani raga Varnam of Patnam Subramanya Iyer in Aadi Thala to



which Aravind appended a few avarthas of kalpana swaras. ‘Maanamu Kavalenu Thalli’, a kriti (Sahana /Roopakam) of Muthiah Bhagavathar, a composer to whose sishya parampara, Aravind’s guru, TNS belongs, was rendered in a breezy manner and was preceded by a brief but pleasing alapana of Sahana.

The kritis rendered as minor pieces were ‘Niravati Sukata’ of Thyagaraja, ‘Mahaganapatim’ of Dikshitar and ‘Marivere Gathi’ of Shyama Sastry. One other kriti embellished with all aspects of manodharma was ‘Aparadhamulu Anniyumanninchi’ of Patnam Subramanya Iyer in Lathangi. He wound up with a colourful ragamalika, ‘Kanna Vaa Manivanna Vaa’ of Ambujam Krishna, a kriti rendered popular by TNS.

The violin rendition by V.S Gokul was fully supportive. Alapana of Thodi and Lathangi can be cited as examples for the complete understanding shown by Gokul. Percussion support by Vijay Ganesh on the Mridangam and Ranganathan, a student of Ghatam maestro Karthick added bright colours to the overall concert atmosphere. The “Thani” suffixed to the Thodi kriti was enjoyable.

On the whole, the concert provided two hours of non-stop listening pleasure to the rasikas on a bright morning.

... V MOHAN



The lecture demonstration by Malladi Brothers - Sreeramprasad and Ravikumar on Tyagaraja’s ‘Neeti Bodha’ kritis was interesting and threw light on many lesser known philosophical aspects of Thyagaraja’s compositions. Senior musician, their father and guru, Vidwan Malladi Suri Babu’s valuable insights were bonus to the audiences.

Prince Rama Varma’s melodious presentations are valued by discerning rasikas. His innovative explorations are cherished by music students. In this concert along with Avaneeswaram Vinu (Violin), B.Harikumar (Mridangam) and Dr. S. Karthick (Ghatam), he displayed his versatility in his alapanas and swara exercises.





With a wonderful presentation of Sahana and 'Chittham irangadadenaiyya' of Sri Papanasam Sivan appending it with melodious slow and vibrant fast-paced kalpanaswaras, Vidwan K.S. Vishnudev enthralled the audience. With him were vidwans S R Mahadevasarma (Violin), K V Prasad (Mrudangam) and Vaikkom Gopalakrishnan (Ghatam)



An all-women team in the concert of Archana & Samanvi (Vocal), V.S.P.Gayatri Sivani (Violin) and Ashwini Srinivasan (Mrudangam) gave a pleasant concert. This Shanmukhapriya ragam followed by Swati Tirunal's 'Mamava karunaya' became a treat for the audience.

His Majesty Shankarabaranam

Any form of art needs to grow and when youngsters take up art in a serious manner, it is heartening. When Vivek Sadasivam started to elaborate pUrvi kalyANi, it was a wonderful affair. He elaborately explored the rAgam including many intricate and classical phrases. And when B Ananthakrishnan replied, it was equally good. The kriti Ananda Natamaduvur was presented well with swarms. Earlier the concert began with Sri Maha ganapthi (gaula) and Rama bhakti samrajya (suddha bangala). A quick Emi dova balkumA (saranga) was to follow



Shankarabaranam is a rAgam that symbolises majesty. Vivek's alApanai was in full justice to the rAga swaroopam. Each sancharam was woven one after another in such a manner that the writer is short of words to express the pleasure it was to listen.

The expansive alapanai was wonderful and the violin response was equally soothing. The tanam was good. A Pallavi composed by Calcutta LN Gurumurthy was presented. The sahitya was 'Saravana bhava Guha gurupara shanmukha arulvaai thirumaal muruga' set in Kanda tripata. While the talam was in chatusra nadai, the Pallavi was in multiple nadai interwoven. It was a grand affair. He explored the Pallavi in a detailed manner showcasing all the different aspects. It was a

wonderful team effort by Vivek and Ananthakrishnan to present the Pallavi. Bharadwaj on mridangam was in top form and played with so much anticipation and his and Sunil Kumar's accompaniment for the Pallavi and for the urupadis presented earlier needs to be commended. Their Tani avarthanam after the Pallavi was special to listen. A Sindhu bhairavi kriti was rendered with a short viruttam to conclude the concert.

On the whole, this concert by a group of young artists was a treat to the rasikas. Though some of them are established stars already, it will be very soon that they are all in the top registers.

... R BHARATHWAJ

Musical Brilliance Unveiled

The stellar team of Abhishek Raghuram, Akkarai Subhalakshmi, and Anantha Krishnan was right on the money from the start. Akkarai Subhalakshmi has just finished her vocal concert with her sister Sornalatha at the same venue and took up her instrument for Abhishek's concert!

Varnam in Khambhoji 'Taruni Ninnu' set the tone for the concert. A breezy alapana in Ananda Bhairavi was a delight with the kriti 'Nimathi Sallaka' chosen for delineation. The highlight of the evening was the sAvEri alapana that followed and the Swati TirunAL kriti 'dEvi pAvANe sEvE caraNa'.

The alapana, the evocative and elaborate neraval at the line 'sOma bimba madahara sumukhi bhakta' brought to the fore Abhishek's mastery of the raga. His amazing breath control, the felicity with which he traversed the three kalams during the neraval and the volley of swaras that followed were an aural treat for the rasikas.

Akkarai and Anantha complemented him so well adding to the listening pleasure. . Would Patri Satish Kumar on the mridangam as scheduled have augmented the experience notches more? Nevertheless, Anantha's brilliance shone in the solo tani. A soothing DarbAri kAnadA and the Jayadeva's Gita Govindam verse 'yAmihE kamiha charanam' wrapped up the proceedings with the rasikas wanting more.



... RAJAGOPALAN VENKATRAMAN



A very brilliant concert by the Akkarai Sisters - Subhalakshmi and Sornalatha. The sisters who also play the violin are known for their excellent manodharma. In this vocal concert by the duo, young violinist Shruthi Sarathy, R Sankaranarayanan on the Mridangam and S Krishna on the Ghatam shared the stage with the sisters.

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Abilash Giriprasad, who has performed many concerts even as 'Issai Mazhalai' has come up to a level through with exemplary guidance from his gurus and his present mentor Vidwan A.S. Murali. His concert in the 2 pm slot at the Sabha along with Trivandrum S.R. Rajasree on the violin and Ethirajan Ramanujam on the Mridangam and N. Rajaraman on the Ghatam can be termed as memorable for those who listened to him.