



2025 SANGEETHA KALASARATHYs

Sangeetha Kalasarathy

Prof. V.V. Subrahmanyam:

A Life in Fidelity and Creativity

❧ **MOHAN S**

Prof. V.V. Subrahmanyam (VVS), who is being conferred the prestigious Sangeetha Kalasarathy Award 2025 by Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, stands as one of the foremost violinists of our times, a torchbearer of multiple schools and traditions in Carnatic music. His career spans decades and generations, marked by fidelity to tradition and creative brilliance.



Born in 1944 in Enakulam to Vadakkencheri Veeraraghava Bhagavathar, VVS inherited a rich musical lineage connected to stalwarts such as Vadivelu of the Tanjore Quartet and Noorani Parameswara Bhagavathar of Swati Tirunal's court. Trained initially by his father, himself a violinist, VVS moved with his family to Chennai at age three. There, he studied under Tripunitura Narayana Iyer, father of violin maestro T.N. Krishnan. Encouraged to accompany vocalists from the age of seven, VVS absorbed the music of great masters while shaping a style uniquely his own.

Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar played a pivotal role in his training, taking the young violinist on concert tours and encouraging him to perform. VVS recalls a trip with Chembai and accompanying the Alathur Brothers unexpectedly at Uppiliappan Koil. Another of his unforgettable concert is supporting flautist N. Ramani at the Music Academy when he was just eleven. These early experiences established him as a prodigy and a sought-after accompanist.

Over the years, VVS accompanied a galaxy of stalwarts: Ariyakudi, Chembai, GNB, Madurai Mani Iyer, Semmangudi, MDR, M.S. Subbulakshmi, D.K. Pattammal, and instrumentalists like T.R. Mahalingam and N. Ramani. He also shared the stage with violinists, most memorably M.S. Gopalakrishnan. In 1966, at

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Vishakha Hari: A Journey of Music, Meaning & Cultural Illumination

❧ **RAJAGOPALAN VENKATRAMAN**

Vishakha Hari stands today as one of the most influential figures in the world of Harikatha and Carnatic music—an artiste whose work blends scholarship, devotion, musical excellence and cultural relevance with grace and depth. Her conferment with the Sangeetha Kalasarathy Award by the Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha recognises not only her artistic brilliance but also the transformative impact she has made on rasikas across generations.



Rooted Beginnings and Holistic Nurturing

Born into a family deeply committed to dharmic values, Vishakha's childhood in Mylapore shaped the foundation of her artistic journey. Her father, Sri. Santhanam, gave up a high-flying corporate career in Tanzania to ensure that his children grew up grounded in Chennai's cultural and spiritual milieu. Her mother, Smt. Vijaya Santhanam, remains a powerful personal and artistic inspiration—a nurturing force who ensured that both Vishakha and her brother, Saketharaman, received a balanced upbringing enriched by academics, sports, swimming and a strong grounding in tradition.

Her formal training reflects this multifaceted foundation. She learnt Carnatic music from the legendary Lalgudi Jayaraman and Bharatanatyam from the distinguished dancer, Sudharani Raghupathy, receiving an education that blended musical precision, aesthetic sensitivity and narrative expression. With deep personal devotion to Sri Kapaleeswarar of Mylapore and Sri Parthasarathy Perumal of Tiruvallikeni, she grew up viewing the arts as an extension of spiritual practice.

The Organic Emergence of a Harikatha Artiste

Vishakha's foray into Harikatha was not pre-planned; it emerged naturally from her concert career. It was Sri Sri Krishna Premi Anna who gently encouraged her to explain the meanings of the Trinity's kritis and the verses of other vaggeyakaras during concerts. What began as contextual explanation gradually

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just 22, he accompanied M.S. Subbulakshmi at her historic United Nations concert, becoming the first Indian violinist to perform in the U.S. Since then, he has toured widely, both as accompanist and soloist, always playing with complete fidelity to the main artist.

His illustrious career has been recognised with numerous awards: Sangeetha Kalamrutha (1988), Kerala Sangeet Nataka Academy Award (1988–89), Kalaimamani (1993), Nadhayogi from Ilayaraja (1994), Akashvani Award (1996), Naadha Brahmam (1996), Sangeet Natak Academy Award (2005), Aasthana Vidwan of Kanchi Mutt (2007), Vani Kala Sudhakara (2013–14), Lifetime Achievement from Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana (2014), Arsha Kala Bhushanam (2014), Mudhra Award of Excellence (2017), Sangeetha Kala Nipuna (2018), and an Honorary Doctorate from Vedic Wellness University, Florida (2025). UNESCO released a recording of his concert - the first for any South Indian instrumentalist - and Yehudi Menuhin himself praised his artistry.

Not confined to Carnatic music, VVS trained in Hindustani violin under Pandit Krishnanand of the Kirana Gharana, joining the ranks of Carnatic musicians like MSG and TVG who explored Hindustani traditions. His first Hindustani concert was released by HMV, and he has performed extensively in this genre also. VVS also plays Veena and Viola.

VVS has composed varnams, tillanas, bhajans, and kritis in Tamil, Sanskrit, and Hindi, and tuned songs of saints and siddhas. His thematic works for AIR's Vadya Vrinda, such as Panchamukhi and Naada Sangamam, won acclaim. He has also invented new ragas, including Priya Ranjani.

His scholarship is equally notable. He authored 'Violin Varalaaru,' a history of the instrument, and 'Sathyameva Jeyathe,' defending the authorship of Maharaja Swati Tirunal's kritis. He has contributed articles to magazines and souvenirs, spoken on radio and television, and delivered lecture-demonstrations in India and abroad. He served as Visiting Performing Artist at Wesleyan University (1966–67) and as Professor of Violin at Tamil Nadu Government Music College, Madurai (1979–82).

As a guru, VVS has trained numerous students, including R.K. Shriram Kumar, Mullaivasal Chandramouli, his brother V.V. Ravi, and his son V.V.S. Murari. His innovative techniques, rooted in research and reflection, have influenced musicians worldwide. Murari himself is a leading violinist, known for creative ventures in India and abroad, and is also being honoured by Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha this year.

Beyond performance, VVS has contributed to society through charity concerts and associations with organisations like Ramakrishna Mission and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. He founded the VVS Foundation to recognise and reward talent globally. Nadabrahmam, an institution promoted by VVS, is engaged in disseminating the results of his research.

VVS recalls with joy, his association with Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, stretching back to several decades and is proud to have been selected for the award of Sangeetha Kalasarathy for the year 2025.

His career, marked by soulful renderings and perfect sensitivity to lyrics, shruti, and the pulse of the main artist, has set new standards for violin accompaniment - standards that continue to inspire students and vidwans across generations.

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evolved into Sangita Upanyasams, and eventually into full-fledged Harikathas interweaving music, philosophy, poetry, culture and storytelling.

Today, she is celebrated for making profound spiritual and ethical truths accessible without dilution. As she notes, "*Harikatha is not merely narration; it is a living tradition that bridges classical wisdom with contemporary life.*"

Music, Philosophy and the Search for the Rāja Mārgam

Reflecting on whether bhakti is core to Carnatic music, Vishakha contrasts the two long-standing streams in the tradition—the gandharva mode that delights in musical enjoyment and the nāḍopāsana mode of the Azhwars, Nayanmars, Purandaradasa and the Trinity, where music becomes a vehicle for inner elevation. To illustrate this, she cites Tyagaraja's immortal message in "*Chakkani Rāja Mārgamulu*"—the call to choose the expansive royal path of devotion over narrower pursuits. For her, bhakti is that rāja mārgam: expansive, elevating and transformative.

A Contemporary Voice for Dharmic Wisdom

Her YouTube series "*தீர்வை நோக்கி யுத்தம் செய்வோம்*" exemplifies her commitment to applying dharmic insights to modern challenges. From young people questioning marriage to struggles with addiction, insomnia, and emotional stress, she brings timeless wisdom into contemporary contexts with clarity and compassion. Speaking of today's Gen Z audience - "*extremely intelligent, well-read and demanding*"—she notes that the responsibility of the artiste is higher than ever: "*There cannot be a dull moment. To meet their expectations, I must constantly equip myself.*"

Artistry, Pedagogy & the Lalgudi Influence

Through the Vijayashri School of Harikatha, Vishakha nurtures young learners with a pedagogy rooted in clarity, discipline, and cultural awareness. Her teaching philosophy is deeply shaped by the guidance of Lalgudi Jayaraman, whose words remain her constant touchstone: "*Today's Vishakha should be better than yesterday's Vishakha. We must elevate ourselves and the audience through every performance.*" This spirit of continual refinement permeates her work—whether Carnatic concerts, thematic Harikathas, or explorations of philosophy, culture, and ethics.

A Cherished Bond with Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha

Vishakha shares a long-standing, emotionally rich association with the Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha. She describes performing here as akin to "*entering a temple*," evoking the spiritual intensity of Vaikunta Ekadasi. Her annual Christmas morning presentations—be they musical or narrative—have become an eagerly awaited tradition, treasured for the oneness and *sukhanubhavam* they create in the rasikas. Receiving the Sangeetha Kalasarathy Award from a Sabha she holds in such deep reverence is, for her, "*a profound blessing and the Sankalpam of Perumal.*"

A Legacy of Elevation

Through her body of work, Vishakha Hari stands as an exemplar of the artiste who is simultaneously a custodian of tradition, an interpreter of contemporary concerns and a guiding light for future generations. Her performances blend devotion and aesthetics; her teachings nurture clarity and compassion; her reflections bring classical wisdom into modern life. The Sangeetha Kalasarathy Award is a fitting milestone in her continuing journey - one that celebrates not only the artiste but the seeker, the storyteller and the cultural torchbearer she has become for countless rasikas across the world.

2025 Life time contribution ACHARYA SARATHYs



Acharya Sarathy Rama Ravi: The living lineage of nuances

R BHARATHWAJ

Rama Ravi chosen as this year's Acharya Sarathy is a renowned musician, well-known for her mastery of nuances. She continues to inspire as both performer and teacher, shaping today's musical world with depth and devotion.

Born in a family steeped in music, Rama Ravi has been breathing music even before her breath. Her mother, Smt. Thulasi Subramaniam was a violinist from the Parur school and her grandmother, Smt. Kamakshi was a Harmonium player. It was music in the atmosphere all the time. Rama Ravi trained under several stalwarts of her time and today she is recognised as an authority on the Veenai Dhanammal bani.

Her extensive work on gamakams has further distinguished her artistry, a mastery that shines unmistakably through her music. Gamakams being the subtle nuances and the main anchoring aspect of our music, it is indeed a great blessing that she is able to present all of it with such ease and perfection. Gamakams are the strong hold of Veenai Dhanammal bani of music and Rama Ravi rightfully brings the best of these aspects in her music. She has also trained in the veenai and mridangam, as well as in Hindustani music and dance, making her a uniquely complete artist.

She vividly recollects going to concerts at Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha as a little girl along with her grandfather, who was a great connoisseur of music. That way she got exposed to the music of many great stalwarts of those days. She goes on to say how she has grown with the sabha by participating in competitions, singing concerts, presenting lec-dems and expresses her gratitude to the Sabha for being a part of her

musical journey at several steps of her career in music. Today, to receive an award from the same sabha is indeed a great recognition, she says. It is the coming of a full circle in the right way.

Rama Ravi says that the prestigious sabha, which is one of the oldest in the city, has a distinctive approach to organising concerts and lecture-demonstrations. The topics chosen for these sessions are consistently thoughtful, challenging, and well-suited to the audiences – rasikas as well as students of music. She recalls presenting lecdems about compositions in rakti ragams, gamakams and compositions of Mysore Vasudevachar among many others.. She further adds that amongst many organisations that run behind popular and commercially successful programs alone, here is a sabha which still recognises real talent and features them and awards them, thereby doing yeoman service to the artform and ensuring that the real music is still alive and passed on to the future in its true form.

Reflecting on her musical journey, Rama Ravi considers herself fortunate to have studied under numerous stalwarts. She says that she tries to imbibe the important aspects such as sahitya, bhavam, gamakams, diction, voice culture, tonal quality amongst many others from each of her teachers and says she is still trying her best to attain that perfection which came effortlessly to her teachers.

Rama Ravi recalls the words of the eminent musician DK Pattammal: "Art should be learnt for the sake of art, and if you strive to master it in its true form, fame and recognition will follow naturally." This guiding thought, echoed by all her gurus - Smt. T. Brinda, Smt. T. Muktha, Smt. T. Balasaraswathi, and Sri T. Vishwanathan of the Veenai Dhanammal school -has remained her guiding principle throughout her journey, and she believes it should inspire every aspirant of music.

Acharya Sarathy Dr. R.K. Padmanabha: A Life Devoted to Carnatic Music

SUNDARARAMAN CHINTAMANI

When Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, one of Chennai's most prestigious cultural institutions with a 125-year legacy, honours an artist, it signifies recognition that transcends geographical boundaries. This year, the Sabha's award goes to Dr. R.K. Padmanabha, a distinguished Carnatic vocalist from Karnataka whose remarkable journey exemplifies how passion and perseverance can overcome all barriers in the pursuit of musical excellence.

"Music has no geographical barrier," Dr. Padmanabha reflects on receiving this honour. "That a prestigious sabha in Chennai is recognising a Karnataka musician makes me extremely happy. It validates the universal nature of our great art form."

Unlike many Carnatic musicians who begin their training in childhood, Dr. Padmanabha's formal musical journey commenced at the age of 25, after joining State Bank of India in 1972. Born in Rudrapatna, a village near Udupi in



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Veena Pichumani Iyer Centenary Award : Mudicondan Ramesh – torchbearer of the Veena tradition

 **SIVAPRIYA KRISHNAN**

Mudicondan Ramesh, the recipient of the Veena Pichumani Iyer Centenary Award, is a Vainika who believes in the subtlety of expression with the Veena. His playing technique is a nice gayaki style, with an emphasis on melody. Ramesh is not given to gimmicky or techno music by altering the sound parameters. Dexterous, yet dignified, he is very much at ease with his instrument and brings out the best.

He has now been playing the Veena for fifty years, having begun at the age of ten. He learnt from his father Narayanswamy Iyer. Since 1990, he has been an active member of the Vadyalahari ensemble conducted by the legendary A. Kanyakumari. He considers Kanyakumari as his Guru and says with absolute sincerity and devotion that he owes a lot to her, for not only giving him a stage, but also teaching him a lot, musically and otherwise.

He was studying to become a Chartered Accountant, but dropped out of the course after passing the Inter exams, as his interest in music was far higher. He worked a day job in a private concern from 1983 till 2003, but gave that up to become a full-time musician. He says his time is full between concerts and teaching assignments, and he hardly misses having a corporate job,



which he has done for twenty years of his life, along with music.

Mudicondan Ramesh considers the concert he played for Mahaperiava's mandapam in Orikkai near Kanchipuram as a special concert among all his concerts. This concert was held after the Kumbhabhishekam of the mandapam. Initially, he was not slotted in the list of artists. An artist scheduled for that evening had to cancel his slot. Ramesh

was called in as a substitute, and that concert went off really well. The other concert he remembers with fondness is the one he played for Ganabharati, Mysore.

It's quite an anomaly that Ramesh has never played a solo concert in Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, and that he is not playing even this year. The award, however, is a matter of pride for him as it is being given by Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, which has completed 125 years of existence, serving the cause of music. To have identified him for an award, and that too, the Veena Pichumani Iyer Centenary Award, is a crown jewel, as Pichumani Iyer is synonymous with Veena. During his centenary year and during the 125th year of the sabha, this award makes it more meaningful, and he cherishes the honour with pride and reverence.

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Acharya Sarathy Dr. R.K. Padmanabha: A Life Devoted to Carnatic Music

Karnataka, he grew up without any musical environment. His father was a portrait and fresco artist, and there were no musicians in the family. Yet, he believes the sacred soil of his birthplace, historically known for its musical heritage before the plague of the 1930s claimed many musicians' lives, somehow drew him to this art.

"When I started formal training, I realised how challenging it was," he recalls. "Others begin at age three or five. I was 25. But through God's grace, dedication, and perseverance, I worked extremely hard for ten years." He chose to remain in Bangalore without taking promotions at the bank, a decision that allowed him to focus on his musical pursuits while maintaining financial stability.

A transformative moment came in October 1989 when a friend gifted him a book on Vadirajateertha's compositions published by the University of Mysore. "There was some transformation in me when I held that book," he remembers. This encounter sparked a lifelong mission. He went on to compose music for 125 compositions of Vadirajateertha and collaborated with Kirtimurthy, the grandson of Mysore Vasudevacharya, to publish 175 compositions with notations and sahitya over five years.

In 1994, Dr. Padmanabha founded the Goshti movement with a revolutionary vision: to democratise Carnatic music. "People think this music is only for elite people, only for intelligent people, confined to certain communities. I didn't like such comments. Music is universal; anybody can learn, anybody can sing," he asserts. His Goshti model breaks all conventional barriers. There are no entry fees, no applications, no restrictions of caste or

religion. Students range from 10 to 90 years of age. He teaches only classical compositions - heavy works like Navavaranam, Navagraha Kritis, Chaturdasha ragamalika and Pancharatna Kritis. To date, he has taught approximately 900 compositions to his Goshti students without accepting any remuneration.

Dr. Padmanabha has also been instrumental in establishing Sapta Swara Devatha Dhyana Mandira at Rudrpatna, his ancestral village on the banks of Kaveri, as a centre for musical gatherings since 2002. Known as "Sangeetha Gramam," the village continues to attract musicians and rasikas alike. His contributions have earned him numerous accolades, including the Sangeetha Natak Academy Award and Kempegowda award. He has composed music for over 700 kritis and trained more than a thousand students.

When asked about his philosophy on music as a profession, Dr. Padmanabha offers thoughtful counsel: "Don't commercialise this sacred art for the sake of money. Don't spoil the sampradayam. Merit will definitely reward you, though it may take time." He quotes Vadirajateertha's own words cautioning against using this divine art merely for fame or fortune. His message to budding artists is one of hope tempered with realism: "There is much competition today, and sometimes politics too. But we must compensate for all these challenges. Hard work and merit will eventually find their reward."

At 75, Dr. R.K. Padmanabha continues to teach, perform, and inspire. His concert at the sabha's December Music Festival promises to be a celebration of a life devoted entirely to preserving and propagating the rich heritage of Carnatic music - proof that this ancient art truly knows no boundaries.

கல்பகம் சுவாமிநாதன் விருது

மங்களம் சங்கீதர்: என்ருரீம மாணவி: சங்கீதப் பயணத்தின் ஈவடுகள்

சங்கீத கலா ஆசார்யா விருது பெற்ற திருமதி. கல்பகம் சுவாமிநாதன் எனது மாமியார் என்பது அனவருக்குமே தெரிந்த ஒரு விஷயம். அவர் பெயரில் உள்ள இந்த விருது எனக்கு வாய்த்தது 'பை சான்ஸ்' (by chance) தான். இது நாள் வரை இந்த விருது திரு பாலசுப்ரமணியம் என்ற சபாவின் மூத்த அங்கத்தினரின் தாயாரின் பெயரிலேயே வழங்கப்பட்டு வந்திருக்கிறது. இந்த வருடம்தான் இதற்கு ஒரு புதிய நாமகரணம். இதனை நான் பாரம்பரிய முறைகளை விட்டுக் கொடுக்காமல் சங்கீதத்தைப் பேணிவருவதால், (கற்றுக் கொடுத்தல் மற்றும் பாடுதல்) எனக்கு இந்த விருது வாய்க்கப் பெற்றது.

நான் ஒரு பழைய காலத்து மனுஷி என்று அர்த்தம் கொள்ளலாம். குருமார்கள் எழுதிக் கொடுத்த நொடேஷனை நானே திரும்ப எழுதிக் கொள்வேன். பதிவு (ரிகார்ட்) செய்யும் பழக்கம் எனக்கு ஏனோ சரியானதாகப் படவில்லை. இது என்னுடைய கருத்து. அதே சமயம் எனது குருவான டி.எம்.டி. (சங்கீத கலாநிதி திரு. டி.எம். தியாகராஜன்) "நல்லது எங்கிருக்கோ அதை எடுத்துக்கோ," என்பதற்கிணங்கி, டேப் மற்றும் யூடியூபில் கிடைக்கும் பாடல்களை நான் பாடம் செய்வேன். இது என்னுடைய பழக்கம்.

என்னுடைய 19 வயது வரை நான் டெல்லி வாசிதான். பட்டப் படிப்பில் (பி.ஏ.ஹான்ஸ்) அரசியலைப் பாடமாகக் கொண்டேன். 1971-ஆம் ஆண்டு எனக்கு மணமானது. புது தில்லியில் இருந்து சென்னைக்கு மாற்றம் என்பது, பெரிதாக ஒன்றும் வேறுபாட்டில்லை என்பேன். எனது முதல் குரு ஆலத்தூர் சகோதரர்களின் மாணவர் திரு கே. ஏ. வெங்கடேஸ்வரன். எனது தாயாரும் பாடுவார்கள். எனக்கு ஸரளி வரிசை போன்றவற்றைத் தவிர்த்து கல்யாணி ஆதிதாள் வர்ணத்திலேயே பாடம் ஆரம்பித்தார்கள். இது எனது தாயாரின் கைங்கர்யம். நான் 6 கட்டையில் பாடுவேன். 'முசிநி' முன் நான் கேதாரகௌளை வர்ணம் பாடிய பெருமை எனக்கு உண்டு.

நான் அவ்வளவாக கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தில் ஆர்வம் காட்டாமல் இருந்தது ஒரு காலம். டெல்லியில் நான் இருந்த சமயம் நிறைய பாடகர்கள் வீட்டிற்கு வருவார்கள், வயலினிஸ்ட் எல். ஷங்கர் (எல்.எஸ்.) சகோதரர்கள் உள்பட. இவர்கள் 6 காலம் வாசித்ததை நான் நேரடியாகவே அந்தக் காலத்தில் கேட்டிருந்தாலும், அப்போதெல்லாம் கர்நாடக சங்கீத உலகிற்கு நான் சென்றதே இல்லை. ஏதோ கேட்பேன், அவ்வளவுதான். அந்த நிலை முற்றிலுமே மாறி, நான் 24 மணி நேரமும் பாடிக்கொண்டே இருக்கிறேன் என்பது தான் இப்போதைய நிலை என்பதை, ஒரு வித பெருமிதத்துடன் கூறிக் கொள்கிறேன். குரு சங்கீத கலாநிதி டி.எம்.டி.யே இதற்குக் காரணம் என்பேன். அவர் கற்பித்த விதம், எடுத்துக் கொண்ட அக்கறை, இவையெல்லாம் நான், இப்போது, பிறருக்குக் கற்பிக்கும் தருணத்தில் நினைவில் வந்து, என்னை அறியாமலேயே வழி நடத்துகிறதோ என்று எண்ணத் தோன்றுகிறது.

பிடித்த ராகம் என்று கேட்டால் பூர்விகல்யாணி. இதில் அமைந்த 'ஸாடி லேனி' என்ற பொன்னையா பிள்ளையின் சாஹித்யமும், சங்கர ஐயரின் 'ஸ்ரீ ராஜ ராஜேஸ்வரி' என்ற உருப்படியும் என்னை மிகவும் கவர்ந்த பாடல்கள்.

அன்று முதலே நான் யாரையும் நாடிச் சென்று கச்சேரி வாய்ப்பைக் கேட்பவள் அல்ல. ம்யூசிக் அகாடமி முதற் கொண்டு



நான் பாடுவதை முதலில் கேட்டவர்களின் ஆதாரத்தைக் கொண்டே, அவர்களது பரிந்துரையினாலேயே கச்சேரிகள் எனக்கு வந்துள்ளன. அநேகமாக எல்லா சபாக்களிலும் நான் பாடியுள்ளேன். திருமதி. கல்பகம் சுவாமிநாதனுடன் இணைந்து தீக்ஷிதர் கிருதிகள் குறித்த ஒரு செயல்விளக்கக் கச்சேரியை ஸரஸ்வதி வாக்கேயக்காரா அறக்கட்டளைக்காக நாங்கள் நிறைவேற்றியுள்ளோம்.

ஜி.ன்.பி. விருதையும் எனக்கு இந்தியன் ஃபைன் ஆர்ட்ஸ் வழங்க உள்ளது. ஜி.என்.பி. என்றதும் உடன் நினைவிற்கு வருவது ஒரு விஷயம். ஒரு முறை டி.எம்.டி அவர்கள் ஜி.என்.பி. பாடுவதைக் கேட்ட பிறகு தான் பாடுவதா வேண்டாமா என்ற அனுமானத்தில் இருந்தாராம். அவரது தகப்பனார் கொடுத்த தைரியத்தில் "உன் வழி தனி வழி. தொடர்ந்து பாடு" என்ற சொல் கேட்டு, தந்தை சொல் மிக்க மந்திரமில்லை என்று பாடித் திகழ்ந்ததாக என்னிடம் மிகுந்த நெகிழ்ச்சியுடன் கூறியுள்ளார்.

இப்போதெல்லாம் முதல் வகுப்பிலிருந்தே பதிவு (ரிகார்ட்) பண்ணிக் கொள்கிறார்கள். அதுதான் நடைமுறை (TREND) என்கிறார்கள். வாத்தியாரிடம் நேரில் வந்து, முகத்தைப் பார்த்துக் கற்றுக் கொள்வதற்கு ஈடாகுமா, என்று பல சமயம் நினைக்கத் தோன்றும். ஒரு 5000 பாடல்களைக் கற்றால் அவற்றில் ஒன்றிரண்டு மறந்து போகலாம். ரூபகப்படுத்திக் கொள்வது எப்படி? உதாரணத்திற்கு "பாஹிமாம்" என்ற தீக்ஷிதரின் மோகன ராகக் கிருதியை ஸ்வரப்படி பாடினால், சோபிக்காமல் போகும். குரு பிடிக்கும் பிடிகள், அவற்றை கிரகித்துக் கொள்ளுதல், இவற்றில் தான் நம் இசையின் அடிப்படைத் தத்துவம் அடங்கி இருக்கிறது. இது என்றுமே மாறாத உண்மைதானே? (நமக்கு இந்த மோகன ராகப் பாடலைப் பாடி நிரூபிக்கிறார் இவர்)

சில மாணவ/மாணவியர் எந்த நேரத்திலும் பாடம் சொல்லிக் கொள்வதற்குத் தயார் நிலையில் இருப்பதைக் காணும் போது மனம் பூரிப்படைகிறது. ஆனால் இதே கருத்தை நான் எல்லா சிஷ்யர்களுக்கும் பொருந்தும் என்று சொல்ல இயலாது. டாக்டர். ப்ரியஸ்ரீ ராவ் என்ற ஒரு மாணவி. எம்.ஏ. படித்திருக்கிறார். என்னுடன் சேர்ந்து பாடிய அனுபவமும் உண்டு. பரதநாட்டியமும் கலாசேஷத்ராவில் பயின்றிருக்கிறார். இது போன்ற தேர்ந்த சிஷ்யர்களை நான் என்னுடைய இசை வகுப்புகள் மூலம் உருவாக்கியிருக்கிறேன். இங்கே எனது இசைப் பயிற்சிகள் காலை 6 மணிக்கே துவங்கிவிடும். தொடர்ந்து நடந்து கொண்டே இருக்கும், உணவு இடைவேளை தான் எனக்கு ஓய்வு நேரம்.

பாரம்பரியம் மிக்க சபாவான ஸ்ரீ பார்த்தஸாரதி ஸ்வாமி சபா எனக்கு அங்கீகாரம் அளித்து, என்னை கௌரவித்திருக்கிறது என்பது எனக்கு ஆனந்தம்தான். சந்தேகமே இல்லை. இந்த விருது பற்றி நான் மிகவும் மகிழ்ந்தாலும், ஒன்று மட்டும் நிச்சயம். நான் மேலும் மேலும் கற்க வேண்டும் என்பதையே இவ்விருது எனக்குத் தவறாமல் உணர்த்துகிறது. என்றுமே எனக்கு மாணவி ஸ்தானம்தான். உதாரணத்திற்கு, வினை வித்வான் ரமணா பாலசுந்தரன் பந்துவராளியில் ஒரு வர்ணம் வாசிக்க, அதை நான் ஸ்வரப்படுத்தி (நொடேட்) பாடம் செய்துள்ளேன். சொல்லப் போனால் என்னுடைய தனிப்பட்ட "நோட் புக்கில்" புழக்கத்தில்தான் இல்லாத சுமார் 65 வர்ணங்கள் என் கைவசம்.

உரையாடியவர்: எஸ். சிவகுமார்

Pudukkottai Dakshinamurthy Pillai Award : N. Manoj Siva – The Rhythm of Sensitivity and Artistry

❧ **RAJAGOPALAN VENKATRAMAN**

Early Life, Family & Guru Parampara

Vidwan N. Manoj Siva, one of the most sought-after mridangam vidwans of the present era, hails from a family steeped in Carnatic tradition. His father, Shri A.N. Siva, an ardent rasika, ensured that music permeated the home, while his mother, Smt. Akhila Siva, a trained musician, taught numerous students and nurtured an atmosphere of learning. Together, they laid the foundation for the artistic journeys of all their children — vocalist N. Vijay Siva, mridangist Manoj Siva, and violinist Smt. Poorna Vaidyanathan.

Manoj began his rhythmic training under Kumbakonam Rajappa Iyer, from whom he gained the impeccable fingering technique, disciplined practice habits, and deep grounding in tām that continue to define his artistry. For a couple of years, one of Rajappa Iyer's senior disciples, Srirangarajapuram Jayaraman, came home to teach Manoj and his brother, shaping their formative musical years. Manoj's tutelage later continued under the legendary Palghat R. Raghu, an association he describes as a complete "eye-opener." Raghu Sir, celebrated for his laya brilliance, subtlety, and thoughtfulness, profoundly influenced Manoj's musical direction.

Career, Accompaniment & Influences

From Palghat Raghu, Manoj learnt the art of accompaniment in its richest and most nuanced form — how to play for kritis, how to respond to different bani-s, how to elevate manodharma moments, and how to refine the architecture of a tani. Raghu Sir's mastery over misra and his ability to infuse every phrase with finesse left a lasting impression on Manoj, who continues to uphold these high standards on stage.

Beyond his gurus, Manoj holds profound admiration for doyen Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman. "A perfectionist to the core, Sri Sivaraman's charismatic and graceful accompaniment elevates every concert, captivating both the connoisseur and the lay listener alike. His remarkable wrist work and refined fingering technique may, for a layperson's understanding, be likened to the celebrated wrist work of the cricketing legend Viv Richards," Manoj remarks with affection.

Manoj's distinguished musical journey began in the mid-1980s, with his December Season debut in 1987. From then on, he has performed tirelessly, playing two or three concerts a day on occasions in his early years. For an accompanist, he observes, "each concert is a mystery that unravels only as it



unfolds," and adapting to diverse musicians becomes "instinctive." His early concert for D.K. Jayaraman at Sastri Hall remains unforgettable. A major turning point came when K.V. Narayanaswamy heard him at the Tyagaraja Aradhana and invited him to Thanjavur — leading to over a hundred concerts together and shaping Manoj's sensitivity, responsiveness and aesthetic maturity.

Artistry, Innovation & Personal Expression

Over four decades, Manoj Siva has remained a custodian of tradition while quietly pioneering subtle innovations. He

feels a deep responsibility to preserve and propagate the aesthetic sensibilities of his gurus — the bani, understanding of where to place a gumki or thoppi and how to enhance the bhava of the kriti without disturbing its soul. "Our tradition gives us immense room to innovate — but always within the boundaries," he says. A recent example is a new mohra in Misra Chapu he crafted on Vijaya Dasami day — "just a subtle twist on the classic," which he happily shared with his students.

Beyond mridangam, Manoj also nurtures a love for singing: his Facebook clips include Tiruppugazh renditions inspired by the Alathur Brothers, teaching sessions for his mother's students, and more. He is carrying forward his guru's laya legacy through the curated online content "Sarvamum Laghu Sri Palghat Raghu," which he presents along with his young colleague Krishna Sriram with more episodes to come.

Association with Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha & Reflections

Vidwan Manoj Siva shares a long and affectionate association with Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, having accompanied innumerable concerts here over nearly forty years. He notes that the Sabha has always given him a "positive, uplifting vibe," making every performance on its stage special. He is deeply honoured to receive the Pudukkottai Dakshinamurthy Pillai Award from the oldest surviving sabha in the Carnatic circuit — an institution that has shaped musical history for over a century.

As a message to younger musicians, Manoj emphasises that guru bhakti and kala bhakti are paramount, and that understanding the emotional essence of a kriti is as essential as technical proficiency. With his grounding, adaptability, refined aesthetics, and thoughtful innovation, Vidwan N. Manoj Siva stands today as one of the finest torchbearers of the mridangam tradition — a musician whose playing embodies rhythm, sensitivity, and enduring artistry.

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at Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha. mail them to : sangeethsarathy@gmail.com

Pudukkottai Dakshinamurthy Pillai Award : B. Ganapathyraman – mridangam with a high melodic quotient

SIVAPRIYA KRISHNAN

B. Ganapathyraman, the elder son of the famed Sethalapathi Balasubramaniam, is a mridangam vidwan who has mastered the art of making his mridangam sing along with the main artist, whatever be the stature or calibre. No overpowering, no unwanted tala jugglery that does not fit the mood of the concert, no loud display of his finger strokes, Ganapathyraman's mridangam playing is high on the melodic quotient.

Ganapathyraman says that he picked up a tin dabba and would casually keep playing in tune with his father while he was singing. Many artists would frequent their house, and he would do the same when anybody came home and sang. Once Srimushnam Raja Rao saw this and started teaching him formally, when he was three. Since Raja Rao was a very busy concert artist, he continued his lessons with Nagai Soundararajan. Late Yagnaraman of Krishna Gana Sabha heard him and took it upon himself to enrol him, by also paying the first month's fees, under Kumbakonam Rajappa Iyer in the sabha's music school, where he taught. He learnt a lot under Rajappa Iyer and admires his Guru's method of teaching and encouragement.



The first concert opportunity arose during 'Veen'a Parthasarathy's wedding reception in 1980, and the first sabha concert opportunity soon followed during the Gokulashtami series, where he accompanied Neyveli Santhanagopalan. As a young boy, he accompanied an eight-hour concert by the veteran, Madurai Somu and his son Madurai Shanmugam, along with Papanasam Sethuraman on the mridangam and Mayavaram Somu on the khanjira, at the Vadapalani Murugan Temple.

He grew up listening to a variety of music, including classical, Tiruppugazh, Tevaram, and bhajans, and gained a sound grasp of how to accompany each of these genres.

Accompanying legends like Balamuralikrishna, Lalgudi Jayaraman, T.N. Seshagopalan, Chengalpeta Ranganathan, and D.K. Jayaraman during their concerts is something he cherishes with fond memories.

Ganapathyraman has been associated with the Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha for over three decades and feels honoured that he has been selected for the award in the name of the percussion stalwart, Pudukkottai Dakshinamurthy Pillai.

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Lord Sri Parthasarathy Perumal graces our Sabha at Venkatragam Pillai Street, Triplicane, every year during the month of January on His way to Ekkaduthangal. This annual festival has been celebrated since 1965, marking decades of divine blessings and spiritual significance.





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Compiled by:
Sri K N Shashikiran

Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar award : Nirmala Rajasekar: A Global Voice for the Veena

SARADHA VENKATAKRISHNAN

Nirmala Rajasekar, a well-known vainika both nationally and internationally, began performing the Saraswathi Veena at the very young age of 13. From that early start, her journey in Carnatic music has spanned several decades, marked by unwavering dedication and devotion. She carries forward the rich legacy of her revered guru, Smt. Kalpagam Swaminathan, under whose guidance she trained for over 30 years. Today, Nirmala Rajasekar stands as a torchbearer of this tradition, embodying the artistry and values instilled by her guru.

Nirmala describes it as an incredible honour to receive the prestigious *Gottuvadyam Sri Narayana Iyengar Award for Musical Excellence* from Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Sabha during its landmark 125th year celebrations. She conveys her heartfelt gratitude to Shri 'Chitravina' Narasimhan and his family for recognising her with this distinction. Nirmala also extends her sincere thanks to Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Sabha and its esteemed panel members for bestowing upon her this award for musical excellence.

Nirmala says her association with our Sabha is very special and it has been for many years. She stepped in as a rasika and gradually started performing in various slots and been a part of Lecture-Demonstrations. This has given her very rewarding experiences. PSS Sabha, Vidya Bharathi Hall, Sabha's various other Organisations where she is been performing are all special and close to her heart.

Nirmala shares that her association with the Sabha has been very special and has spanned many years. She first entered as a rasika and gradually began performing in various slots, also been a part of many lecture-demonstration sessions. These opportunities, she says, have been very rewarding. The Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, Vidya Bharathi Hall and the Sabha's other affiliated organisations where she has performed, all hold a special place in her heart.

She recalls the similarities of Veena and Gottuvadyam and shared an interesting event where her Guru Smt. Kalpagam Swaminathan had performed with the legendary doyen Budalur Krishnamurthy Sastri, a direct disciple of Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar. This deep-rooted connection to the parampara is more significant and to be continued.

In her musical journey, Nirmala has been the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and honours. Beginning with the Kalaimamani conferred by the Government of Tamil Nadu, she went on to receive the USA AP Anderson Award for Cultural Legacy in 2023. She was also the first Indian musician to be awarded the McKnight-Bush Fellowship. Beyond these distinctions, Nirmala has served as Chair of the American



Composers Forum for four years and as Vice President of the Global Carnatic Music Association (GCMA). Her performances have reached international stages, including the UN-Carnegie Hall, as well as countries across Asia and the Middle East. She is also celebrated as the first

Veena artiste to perform in Mexico and Turkey. She holds A -TOP grade in AIR.

Behind every accolade in Nirmala's journey stand the blessings of her revered gurus, who mentored her from diverse perspectives. Smt. Kamala Aswathama, Dr. S. Balachander, Prof. T.R. Subramanyam, Sri B. Seetharama Sharma, Sri Calcutta K. S. Krishnamurthy, Sri M.S. Anantharaman, Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman, Dr. B.M. Sundaram and the Veteran Vidushi Smt. Kalpagam Swaminathan.

Nirmala offers her gratitude to the Universe and dedicates this award to her loving parents, all her Gurus, the sabhas, rasikas and her disciples affirming her belief that teaching is, in itself, a profound learning experience.

Having had the opportunity to live in many countries, she has enriched her knowledge through different musical traditions and collaborations with cross-cultural musicians. This exposure has enabled her to present choirs and albums that uphold the core values and aesthetics of the art form.

Nirmala says that in choosing to be a vainika over pursuing a career as an Artificial Intelligence researcher, the path of music has given her divine satisfaction and fulfilment. Expressing her deepest desire, she says: "I wish to play the veena for as long as I can hear and as long as my body allows, and I also wish to be born a vainika in my next *janma*."

She serves as an ambassador of music in the USA, hosting musicians and organising concerts that connect rasikas across the globe. She is also the founder of Naadharasa, a non-profit organisation built on the vision to "Dream Big" by nurturing and expanding community through music. From this year, Naadharasa, together with Shri H. Balasubramanyam, has instituted the Kalpagam Swaminathan Award. The award is conferred upon Smt. Mangalam Shankar this year in recognition of her commitment to upholding the traditions and heritage of Carnatic music.

As an artist, Nirmala stands as a radiant inspiration for the next generation of musicians and music lovers. Her journey rooted in tradition yet enriched by global experiences reflects devotion, discipline and an unyielding love for music.

Isai Methai G. Ramanathan Award : Vidya Kalyanaraman: A Versatile Voice Rooted in Tradition

R BHARATHWAJ

One of the most important traits for a musician is versatility, and Vidya Kalyanaraman exemplifies this quality with grace and depth. She has established herself as a musician with a distinctive style and firm standing in the Carnatic music world.

From a very tender age, Vidya nurtured the ambition of becoming a full-time musician, a dream she pursued with dedication and discipline. Under the initial guidance of Smt. Padma Sandilyan and later under the tutelage of Smt. Suguna Varadachari, she blossomed into a fine artiste. Vidya has had the privilege of accompanying both her gurus on stage on several occasions, and their mentorship has been instrumental in shaping her into the accomplished musician she is today.

She is the recipient of a Central Government scholarship to pursue music and was honoured with the Young Achiever Award from Anna University in 2003. In 2005, she won first prize in the AIR competition, which earned her a placement in the B grade directly; she later advanced to the B-High grade through consistent excellence. In addition, she has also won tambura prizes from sabhas like the Indian Fine Arts Society.



For Vidya, music is far more than performance - it is a way of expressing emotions, of connecting and communicating with the audience and of discovering herself. She believes that when music is sung with love and joy, it naturally reaches the listener's heart and resonates with them deeply. She goes on to say that music is the purest form of prayer, a sacred offering that brings one closer to the divine.

She also holds in high regard the genius of Sri G. Ramanathan, a composer who skillfully wove classical ragams and traditional tunes into his works. Vidya has learnt and performed several of these numbers on different occasions. She describes the experience as both challenging and rewarding. Mastering the subtle nuances of his music, she says, has broadened her understanding of music and sharpened her precision.

Vidya fondly recalls her association with Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, beginning as a young schoolgirl attending concerts, then participating in competitions and eventually performing on its stage. Receiving an award from this prestigious institution during its landmark 125th year celebrations is, for her, a moment of immense joy and fulfilment. She expresses her heartfelt gratitude to the Sabha for this honour, which she treasures as a milestone in her musical journey.

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Hon. Mr. C. Subramaniam presenting on behalf of the Sabha an ivory model of "Gitopadesam" to Kumari Vyjayantimala on the occasion of her "Thiruppavai" performance in aid of Sabha Building Fund held on 31-7-1960. The net proceeds being Rs.17,000/-



A scene from Ramayana, a Dance Drama staged by the Dances of India (The Travancore Sisters) Padmini, Ragini & Troup on 25-3-1961 in aid of the Building Fund of the Sabha

பாலக்காடு மணி ஐயர் நூற்றாண்டு விருது

T.G.முத்துக்குமாரசாமி: தவில் என்னை ஆட்கொண்டது, வழி நடத்திச் சென்றது

நீ சற்றே விலகியிருக்கும் பிள்ளாய், ஸன்னிதானம் மறைக்குதாம் என்று சிவபிரானை மறுமொழி கொடுக்கச் செய்து, வழிமறைத்து நின்ற நந்தி வாகனத்தை, வழி விட்டு விலகி நிற்கச் செய்த சிவஸ்தலம், திருப்புங்குளார். இவ்வுரைச் சார்ந்த தவில் விற்பன்னர் T.G. முத்துக்குமாரசாமி அவர்கள் பாலக்காடு மணி ஐயரின் நூற்றாண்டு விழா விருதைப் பெறுவதற்கு தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப் பட்டுள்ளார். விருது பெறுபவரைக் கைப்பேசி மூலம் தொடர்பு கொண்டு, சபாவின் தரப்பில் பேசினோம்.

“திரு பாலக்காடு மணி ஐயர் வாசித்ததை நேரில் பார்க்கவில்லையெனினும் அவரைப் பற்றி நன்கு அறிவேன். முதலில் இந்த விருதினைப் பெறுவதற்கு எனக்குத் தகுதியுள்ளதா எனும் ஐயம் அறிவிப்பைக் கேட்டவுடன் ஏற்பட்டாலும், இறுதியில் பெற இசைந்தேன்,” என்று நிதானமான பேச்சுடன் துவங்கினார், முத்தக்குமாரசாமி.

தொடர்ந்து பேசுகையில், இரண்டு முக்கியமான அனுபவங்களைப் பற்றிக் கூறினார். ஒன்று தனது பதிமூன்றாவது வயதில் புகழ்மிகக் வலையப்பட்டி திரு AR சுப்பிரமணியத்துடன் மேடையில் அமர்ந்து வாசிக்க ஒரு சூழ்நிலை அமைந்தும், அது ஈடேறவில்லை. நிறைவேறாமல் போனது பெரும் வருத்தமே. வலையப்பட்டியால் அன்று வர இயலவில்லை. மற்றொன்று, தனது ஒன்பதாவது வயதில் தவில் வாத்தியம் குறித்து அதிகம் அறிந்திராத பருவத்தில், காலஞ்சென்ற திருவாளப்புத்தூர் திரு T A கலியமூர்த்தி தன்னுடன் இரண்டாவது தவில் வாசிக்க மேடையில் அமர்த்திக்கொண்டது. மிகுந்த உவகையுடன் “அன்று முதல் அவர் இறக்கும் வரை, ஒரு பதினைந்து இருபது வருடங்கள் என்று கூறலாம், அண்ணன் கலியமூர்த்தி வாசித்த இடங்களில் பெரும்பாலானவற்றில் வாசிக்கும் பாக்கியம் எனக்கு வாய்த்தது.”

முத்துக்குமாரசாமி பாரம்பரியம் மிக்க தவில் பரம்பரையைச் சேர்ந்தவர். அவரே சொல்கிறார்: “கோவிலில் எனது பாட்டனார் அங்குள்ள ஒரு தவில் வித்வான் ஆவார். அவ்வாறே எனது தகப்பனார், திருப்புங்கூர் திரு T K கோவிந்தராஜன் எனும் பெயருடன் விளங்கிய ஒரு தவில் வித்வான் தான் ; தன் தகப்பனாரைப் பின்பற்றிவிட்டார். ஆக, எங்கள் வீட்டில் சதா தவில் நாதத்தின் ஒலி கேட்டுக் கொண்டே இருக்கும். ஒன்று, எனது தகப்பனார் சிஷ்யர்களுக்கு பாடம் நடத்திக் கொண்டிருப்பார். அல்லது அந்த மாணவர்கள் முயன்று வாசித்துக் கொண்டே இருப்பார்கள். பள்ளி சென்று பயின்றாலும் எண்ணமெல்லாம் தவில். அது என்னை ஆட்கொண்டுவிட்டது. சிக்கென என்னைப் பிடித்து என்னை வழிநடத்திச் சென்றது போலும். அகத்தும் புறத்தும் தவில். எண்ணம் எல்லாம் தவில் மீதே. இந்த “ருட்டுக்கு” நான் வந்தது இப்படி!”

தொடர்ந்தது சம்பாஷணை, “சின்ன ஊராதலால் ஏதோ தவில் வாசிப்பை மக்கள் ஒரு இடையூறாகக் கருதியதே இல்லை. சொல்லப் போனால் இங்கே நிறையக் குடும்பங்கள், சுமார் 27 எனலாம், தவில் மற்றும் நாகசுவரத்தைப் பழகியவர்கள். இந்த ஊரில் பிறந்ததற்கு எனக்குப் தனிப் பெருமைதான். மேலான சந்திதி. நாகசுவரத்திற்கும் வரவேற்பு.”

மூன்று மகன்கள் இந்த ரூட்டுக்கு வரவில்லை. முதல் மகன் பிறந்த உடனேயே நான் தவில் ரெடி செய்துவிட்டேன்.



நாகசுவரமும் சொல்லி வைத்து விட்டேன். அதுவும் ரெடியே. வயலின் அல்லது வேறு வாத்தியம் என்றாலும் நான் தயார். ஆனால் அவர்கள் படிப்பில் அதிக நாட்டம் உடையவர்களாக இருந்தார்கள். அவர்கள் அவர்களது வழியை மேற்கொண்டுள்ளனர். அதுவும் நல்லதே!

சொல்லிக் கொடுக்கும் போது எதிர் தவில் அதிகமாகத் தேவை இருக்காது. மாணவர்களிடம் நல்ல பிக்அப் உண்டு. ஒரு வேளை சொற்கள் வாசிக்க இயலவில்லையென்றால் எதிர்தவில் தேவைப்படலாம்.

என்னுடைய ஒரே ஆசை! பெரிய வித்வான்கள் ஏற்கெனவே வாசித்தை “நிறையக் கேக்கணும்”. பெரியவர்கள் எல்லாத்தையுமே செஞ்சிட்டுப் போய்ட்டாங்க. புதுசா செய்ய வேண்டியதில்லை. அவர்கள் 100 செய்தார்கள் என்றால் அதில் இரண்டு எடுத்துக் கொண்டாலே போதுமானது

பாரம்பரியம் மிக்க ஸ்ரீ பார்த்தசாரதி சபாவின் இந்த மாபெரும் விருதைப் பெற்றமைக்கு மிகுந்த மகிழ்ச்சியடைந்ததாக அவர் குரல் வெளிப்படுத்தியது. தனது ஊரின் மகிமையைப் பற்றிப் பெருமிதம் கொண்டார். ஊர்க்கோவிலில் எவ்வாறு சனிபிரதோஷத்திற்கு விசேஷ பூஜை நடக்குமென்று நமக்கு விவரித்தார். விடை கொடுத்தோம்!

உரையாடியவர்: எஸ். சிவகுமார்

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97th Year Celebration Inauguration - Festival conducted for 22 days in February 1997. Inaugurated by Dr. MAM Ramaswamy, Pro Chancellor, Annamalai University. Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi render the Prayer Song and Lit the Kuthuvilakku. Chief Guest Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer. Sri. TV Sankaranarayanan conferred Sangeetha Kalasarathy. Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti Sabha President, Sri. A. Natarajan, Director, Doordarshan Kendra, Sri. T. Sadavisam, Secretaries of the Sabha K. Hariharan and M. Krishnamurthy in the picture.

Dr. M.L. Vasanthakumari Award : Shruthi Shankar Kumar – Harmony of discipline and creativity

REVATHI R

For Shruthi Shankar Kumar, this year's recipient of Dr. M L Vasanthakumari Award from Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, music has never been just a hobby or a passing interest. It has been a steady companion for more than twenty years, shaping her identity and guiding her choices. What began as a simple *paattu class* in childhood - the kind most parents enroll their children in - soon became something deeper. "I enjoyed the classes," she recalls. "By the time I was in Class 10, I was attending more concerts and slowly beginning to understand the nuances. As a first-generation musician, it took time, but the interest kept growing."

Shruthi's training has been guided by two gurus - both, incidentally, violinists - each leaving a distinct and lasting mark on her musical journey. For a decade she trained under Palghat Sri Rajaram, a strict teacher whose discipline was both demanding and necessary. His style, influenced by the great D.K. Pattammal, emphasised repetition until perfection was achieved. "He insisted to be with music mentally always," Shruthi says. "That seriousness and commitment to practice was something I really needed."

In 2014, she began learning under Delhi P. Sunderrajan. The shift brought fresh perspectives. "When I listened to him for the first time, I was amazed at his brilliance," she remembers. "He explores the unexplored parts of manodharmam." Any composition she wanted to learn was with him already and he generously taught them, she adds. He also taught her how to write notations. Together, her two gurus gave her both the discipline and the creativity that now define her music.

While pursuing Chartered Accountancy, Shruthi was already performing. Soon after, she also began learning and teaching yoga.



Balancing three professions proved overwhelming and she eventually chose to give herself fully to music. "My connection with music was stronger," she says. That decision, though difficult, was the turning point that allowed her to grow as an artiste.

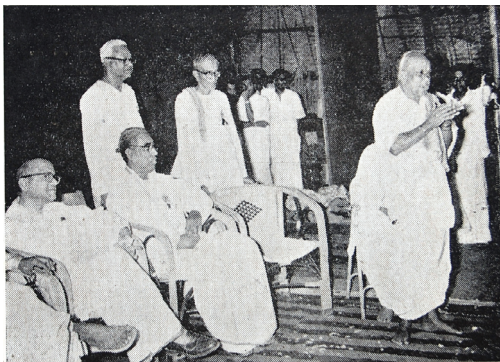
Shruthi's favourite part of singing is detailed raga alapanas. She loves taking on challenging ragas, pushing herself to see how far she can go. Experimenting with *poruthams* and weaving swarams into kritis excites her - it is where she feels her creativity most alive.

Her bond with Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha is long and cherished. In 2014, she received the prize for the best concert here, a recognition from the city's oldest sabha with its proud legacy of continuous music festival for 125 years now. Since then, she has performed almost every year on its stage. Now, eleven years later, she finds herself honoured once again - this time with an award in the name of the legendary Sri M.L. Vasanthakumari. "I have listened to and learnt a lot from MLV and from Smt. Sudha Ragnathan's singing," Shruthi says. "I am grateful to the Sabha and to Sudha ma'am for choosing me for this recognition."

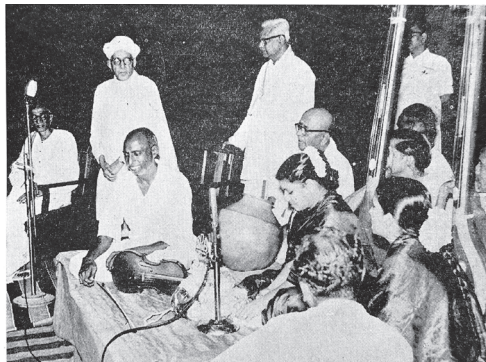
Looking back, Shruthi knows her journey has been possible only because of her gurus and her family. "My gurus taught me without holding anything back," she says with gratitude. "And my family's support has been a blessing. To even get into the singing slots among so many talented artists is itself a blessing."

From the little girl who enjoyed *paattu class* to the artiste now honoured on prestigious stages, her journey is a reminder that music, when pursued with love and seriousness, becomes not just an art but a way of life.

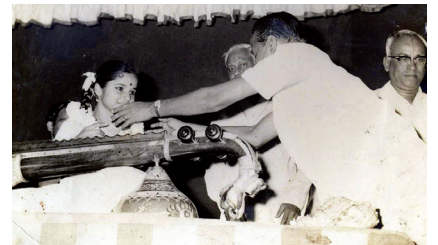
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Sabha Diamond Jubilee - 1960:
Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, Inauguration
Day. Sri Ariyakudi's reply to the felicitations in
completion of 50 years' service to Music



Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Iyer addressing the members
on the occasion of Music Concert by
Srimathi M. S. Subbulakshmi on 11-9-1960



'Veena' Gayathri performing at the
Sabha as young 'baby' Gayathri

Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu Award : V.V.S. Murari – the scion of the violin Parampara

 **SIVAPRIYA KRISHNAN**

V.V.S. Murari has had the fortune of learning music and violin from his grandfather, Vadakanchery Veeraraghava Bhagavatar; his father, V. V. Subramaniam; and from Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer. He hails from a family of musicians over four generations. Trained to both sing and play the violin, he received a complete music education under great masters. His training with Semmangudi continued from his high school to college years. Murari would sing and play the violin while he taught the songs.

Murari was educated at Sankara Senior Secondary School, Chennai and holds a Master's degree in Management and Music from the University of Madras. His first public concert was in 1986, a duet he played with his father. Thereafter, he has held a corporate job in the banking sector for ten years, having worked for American Express, Royal Bank of Scotland and Standard Chartered.



Over the last ten years, he has donned the hat of a music organiser. He started Samaa Arts with the VVS Foundation to promote young talent, give opportunities to deserving artists, promote Nagaswaram artists in temples and conduct concert tours for artists abroad. The program he conducts during the December Margazhi season in the morning, titled Ekanta Sangeetha Seva in the Raghavendra Mutt in Mylapore near RR Sabha, has become something that people look forward to. Despite his busy concert schedules, Murari is present at 4.30 am in the morning every day there without fail, to see through the

proceedings. Another program, Nadarpanam in Kapali temple, is another famous series. Apart from the Violin, he has mastered the Viola and regularly plays VIOLIN-VIOLA duets with violinist Vittal Ramamurthy.

Murari has been performing in Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha for the last forty years, since 1987. He is both proud and grateful for receiving the Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu Award from the sabha. Dwaram and violin are inseparable terms, and to receive an award in his name is a great honour for Murari.

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To mark the commencement of the Sabha's Centenary Year, a special concert was held on January 1, 2000. Sangita Pithamaha Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Iyer, at the remarkable age of 92, performed alongside Prof. T. N. Krishnan, Umayalpuram Dr. Umayalpuram Sivaraman, and Sri G. Harishankar." The Hindu news paper reported "Today's performance and that too on the first day of the centenary year of the sabha, had to be written down in golden letters.