



## SRI PARTHASARATHY SWAMI SABHA

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# SANGEETHA SARATHY



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## SANGEETHA KALASARATHY: Nagai R. Muralidharan

**N**agai R. Muralidharan, a distinguished violin maestro, will receive the esteemed Sangeetha Kalasarathy from Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha this year. With a music career spanning over five decades, Muralidharan stands among the top-ranking and finest musicians in the field.

Reflecting on his early days, Muralidharan fondly recalls his beginnings with the Sabha, reminiscing, "As a school boy, I accompanied my guru Sri R.S. Gopalakrishnan to perform at this esteemed Sabha." His musical journey intertwined with performances alongside eminent artists like S. Kalyanaraman, flutist N. Ramani, T.N. Seshagopalan, and the renowned Maharajapuram Santhanam, drawing full-house audiences. Particularly treasured is his experience performing alongside the veteran T.V. Sankaranarayanan when he was awarded 'Sangeetha Karasarathy' during the centenary year of Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Sabha.

"Parthasarathy Sabha has been a constant support throughout my musical odyssey. Year after year, I have been on its stage, performing for seniors musicians' concerts and participating in lecture demonstrations focused on unique themes and imparting knowledge to music students," Muralidharan expresses.

He finds joy in collaborating with the next generation of musicians, delighting in performing alongside talents like Neyveli Santhanagopalan and the Carnatica brothers. Muralidharan encourages young musicians to absorb the essence of past maestros, emphasising the value of learning from stalwart musicians and nagaswaram artistes. "We are eager to share our knowledge and guide passionate students and performers striving to elevate their musical prowess," he affirms.

"Among all the awards, being recognised by a sabha that has been integral to my growth is truly an honor," Muralidharan warmly concludes.

... As told to **REVATHI R**



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We value your feedback about this newsletter. You are welcome to share your thoughts on the concerts and lec-dems you attend here at Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha.

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## Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu Award: Dr. M.L.V. Award Vittal Ramamurthy Vittal Rangan B

Vittal Ramamurthy, an internationally acclaimed violinist and a distinguished artist of the All India Radio, embodies the essence of the revered Lalgudi bani as its torchbearer and principal disciple. Renowned for his unwavering dedication and exceptional talent, his repertoire spans across various roles - from a solo virtuoso to an exemplary accompanist, an educator, and, above all, a humble learner in the realm of artistry. His musical journey is marked by numerous solo violin performances and collaborations with legends of the past and present across the globe.



Traversing the world, Vittal Ramamurthy not only showcases India's rich musical heritage but also participates in International Jazz festivals and Duet concerts alongside globally acclaimed artists. His knowledge-sharing endeavors include Lecture Demonstrations and workshops conducted at esteemed institutions such as Rice University, Harvard University, and Concordia University.

Dedicated to propagating Carnatic music, Vittal Ramamurthy mentors students worldwide, nurturing many who have evolved into leading performers. He also orchestrates free summer music camps annually in his hometown, Karunbithil near Dharmasthala, India, fostering around 300 children in a Gurukulam-style training. His musical prowess earned him an invitation to perform at the Rashtrapati Bhavan for U.S. President Barack Obama and other dignitaries in New Delhi in 2010.

His artistry continues to captivate audiences worldwide, enriching the musical landscape with his emotive and resonant performances.

**REVATHI R**

## Dr. M.L.V. Award: Kalyanapuram S. Aravind

Young musician Kalyanapuram Aravind, chosen for the MLV award by Parthasarathy Swami Sabha this year, is a disciple of Padmabhushan Sangeetha Kalanidhi Madurai Sri TN Seshagopalan. Having been under his tutelage since the tender age of 4, he grew up witnessing the most exquisite musical moments of his guru. And being exposed to such charisma, it was natural for him to take music as his life.

His outlook for music is simple. "Keep preparing and presenting. Be honest about what you learn. What you present will pave the way for how your music should be in the years to come. Fixing goals for taking one's music somewhere is a futile exercise since music is a very abstract art form and keeps evolving with what we learn. If you are honest in your learning and faithful to the musical values that you possess, the music will take you forward to where the music wishes you to place you," he says.

"Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha is one of the Sabhas that has constantly been motivating me by providing opportunities during their December music festival right from my early days", he says. He feels honoured to have been selected for this prestigious award and happy that the Sabha is recognising his humble work in the field.

He adds that Smt MLV Amma is a towering personality in music. Her music made him ponder on different aspects of his style. Music is universal and styles may be different but as a true musician, he has always enjoyed Smt, MLV's music and revered all salient aspects.

... As told to **R BHARATHWAJ**



Vittal Rangan, a young violinist, stands out for his innovative approach while upholding the rich traditions of music. His journey commenced at the age of 8 under the tutelage of the veteran RR Keshavamurthy, later continuing his training with the esteemed Sangeetha Kalanidhi Kum. A Kanyakumari. An 'A' graded violinist by All India Radio, Vittal boasts an impressive array of accolades, including the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Shironmani Award, Lavanya Shruti Nipuna from the Puvanur Legacy Trust, and consecutive Best Concert Awards from the revered Music Academy. The list extends to include the prestigious Best Violinist Award at the Kalavanta National Youth Festival in 2014, among others, marking his exceptional contributions to music.

Beyond being a highly sought-after accompanist, Vittal has cultivated a distinct identity as a solo performer. His skillful support to his mentor Kum. Kanyakumari and collaborations with eminent musicians globally have solidified his reputation.

In addition to his musical prowess, Vittal is a Chartered Accountant. His remarkable achievement of clearing the entire course in his very first attempt speaks volumes about his commitment and diligence in both fields.

Vittal's dual mastery in music and accountancy reflects his multifaceted talent, making him a unique and noteworthy figure in both realms and a testament to his dedication and versatility. Youthfulness is a marked characteristic of MLV amma's music and it is apt that Vittal Rangan is receiving the award in her name.

## Palghat Mani Iyer Centenary Award : Dr. Yella Venkateshwara Rao

**S**ri Parthasarathi Swami Sabha will be presenting the Palghat Mani Iyer Centenary award to Mridangam Maestro Dr. Yella Venkateshwara Rao, who is a man of considerable achievements!

A resident of Attapur, Hyderabad, and born in a patriotic family, Pandit Dr. Yella Venkateshwara Rao garu, started giving public concerts at the tender age of seven. His father Sri Ramamurthy was a disciple of Dwaram and his youngest grandfather Yella Veerasamy was a mridanga vidwan. Yella's guru was Sri Yella Somanna. Somanna's guru in turn was the inimitable Mridangam Maestro, Padma Bhushan Palghat T.S. Mani Iyer.

Yella garu, had an illustrious career and retired as Professor, Coordinator and Performing Artist at Rajiv Gandhi University Knowledge. He has served in AIR (All India Radio), from 1962 to 1991. He was a Mridangam Artist belonging to the "A" Top Grade, since 1979.

He is a world record-holder, who entered the Guinness Book of Records for his achievement of giving a non-stop performance for thirty six (36) hours,

playing on "Mridanga Maha Yagnam", without a morsel of food or a gulp of water. He was conferred "PADMASRI" by Government of India in the year 2008.

Name the artiste and you'll find Yella garu has accompanied them. The list is truly phenomenal in its breadth and includes Bharath Ratnas, M.S. Subulakshmi, Pandit Ravishankar. And the others were Madurai Somasundaram, M.L. VasanthaKumari, D.K. Jayaram, Brindha & Muktha, Semangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Dr. Balamuralikrishna, Dr. L. Subrahmanyam, K.J. Yesudas, and the list goes on ad infinitum.

His creativity knew no bounds and he dazzled with producing and choreographing a number of musical ballets and dramas in classical carnatic, folk and light styles, presenting novel themes and programmers at Doordarshan, Hyderabad. He introduced solo Mridangam



concerts viz. Mimicry in Mridangam and Laya Mridangamdhyanam, created and composed different talas and many laya patterns.

Dr. Yella charitable trust started 25 years back has been in the forefront in conducting many social activities to help the poor and the needy and deserving folk.

**S SIVAKUMAR**

## G. Ramanathan Award : Subhasree Thanikachalam

Sri Parthasarathi Swami Sabha will be presenting the G. Ramanathan Award to Media Fame, Producer and Arts Curator, Smt. SUBHASREE THANIKACHALAM

அவர்கள் பேசியதிலிருந்து:

இங்கே நடப்பவை எல்லாமே சிட்டி (city) சார்ந்தவை யாகப் போய்விட்டன. வெளியூரில் இருப்பவர்களுக்கு இதனை அனுபவிக்க வாய்ப்பே இல்லாமல் போய் விடுகிறது. அது போலவே நீண்டகச்சேரிகள் என்றில்லாமல் ஒரு ஒன்றரை மணி நேர கச்சேரி போதுமானதாகப்பட்டது. தொலைக்காட்சி அலைவரிசை களில் (satellite channels) சினிமாவைத் தவிர அநேகமாக வேறொன்றும் காண்பதற்கில்லை. கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தை எப்படி இவர்களை ரசிக்க வைப்பது. இந்த யோசனைகள் என்னுள் வேலை செய்ய ஆரம்பித்ததன் விளைவே இந்த காண்பெட்ட (concept) உருவாவதற்குக் காரணம். அடுத்து தீம் என்றவுடன், அதே பாடல்கள் திரும்பத் திரும்ப வராமல் இருக்கப் பெரிதும் உதவியது.

அடுத்து முக்கியமாக ஆடியன்ஸ் நேராகக் கலைஞரிடம் உரையாடுதல். ஏதோ கலைஞர்கள் ஒரு அணுகாத இடத்தில் வீற்றிருப்பதாக எண்ண வேண்டாம். முதலில் ஆரம்பித்தபோது எப்படி நடக்கும் என்றே கவலை. Not a saleable concept! யார் வருவார்கள் என்ற கேள்வியே பயமுறுத்தல் தான். இப்போது அதை எல்லாம் தாண்டி வந்து விட்டோம். ஒரு பாஷன் (passion) தான் எங்களுடைய முக்கியமான உந்து சக்தி. நாங்கள் பெருமையுடன் சொல்லிக் கொள்வது, அடுத்த தலைமுறைக்கான இளைஞர்களை உருவாக்கி விட்டோம் என்பதையே. பழைய



பாடல்கள், ஏன் புதியவையும் தான், எனது ஃபிங்கர் டிப்ஸ்! இதற்கு முக்கிய காரணம் எனது தகப்பனார் திரு ரங்கநாதனே. அவர் ஒரு நல்ல ரசிகர். கலையை முழுமையாக நேசித்தவர். அவரிடமிருந்துதான் இந்த கல்ச்சர் (culture) என்னுள் இறங்கியிருக்கிறது.

தற்காலத்து இளைஞர்களுக்கு ஒரு வார்த்தை! உங்களுடைய பாஷன் (passion) எதுவோ அதன் பின்னே செல்லுங்கள். அதே சமயம் வருங்காலத்தைப் பற்றியும் நீங்கள் ஆலோசித்திருக்க வேண்டும். மீடியா என்பது

நாங்கள் ஆரம்பித்த போது இருந்ததை விட இப்போது உருத்தெரியாமல் மாறி விட்டது. எதைச் செய்தாலும் ஒரு டிமிடிட்டி (timidity) வேண்டாம். ஆம்...உங்களிடம் கேடயமும் இருக்க வேண்டும், வானும் இருக்க வேண்டும். ஒன்று தற்காத்துக் கொள்ள, மற்றொன்று அவசியமிருந்தால் தாக்க.

முடிக்கும் முன்.....

எல்லாக் கலைஞர்களுள் திரு ஜி ராமநாதன் அவர்களை ஒரு உன்னத ஸ்தானத்தில் வைத்திருப்பவள் நான். இவர் பெயரில் எனக்கு ஒரு விருது, அதுவும் பாரம்பரியம் மிக்க பார்த்தசாரதி சபா வழங்கி கௌரவிக்கிறது என்பது எனக்குப் பெரும் உவகையை அளிக்கிறது. வாழ்நாள் முழுவதிலும் இந்த அரிய விருதை நான் போற்றிக் கொண்டே இருப்பேன். இறைவன் என்னை ஆசீர்வதிப்பானாக! எதற்கு? இதுவரை என்னை இசையுடன் பயணிக்கச் செய்த அவன், இனி உள்ள ஆயசு பூராக அவ்வாறே இருக்கச் செய்வானாக. மிக்க நன்றி!

••• Interview by **S SIVAKUMAR**

## Partha Acharya Puraskar : Veena Vidushi Dr. R.S. Jayalakshmi

Dr. R.S. Jayalakshmi is bestowed with the Partha Acharya Puraskar this year. As a renowned musicologist, teacher and Vainika, Dr RS Jayalakshmi regularly presents lec-dems at Parthasarathy Swami Sabha. And every year, Parthasarathy Sabha too takes pride to schedule a lec-dem of Dr. RSJ.

As she recollects, Parthasarathy Sabha has a uniqueness in identifying topics and themes for lec-dems. The topics chosen are such that, the sessions would be beneficial to the students of music and the lay rasikas. Tanam, handling of allied ragams, gamakas and musical forms are some of the topics she has recently handled. She adds that these lec-dems would also involve the attendees and become practice sessions for students. For example, in a lec-dem

on 'dwi tAla' practice, the attendees could learn to put different talams in both hands.

As a teacher, Dr. RSJ feels that students who come to lec-dems should come with background preparation. Since the topic is known, students could look up some basics to assimilate what is said. It would also help in asking good questions during the open session. "Preparing for a lec-dem also needs to be rigorous. The audience could ask rather tricky questions at times and an acharya should be prepared to answer them," she says. Questions such as 'when to introduce gamakas to students', and 'how



to handle musical forms' are commonly asked, she says. When talking about ragams, differences in handling them by different composers, especially the Trinity, is a very common theme.

Dr. RSJ is very happy to be receiving this Acharya Puraskar and says, "At any age, recognition is always special and it makes a person very happy and proud when they are recognised and awarded for their work."

... As told to **R BHARATHWAJ**

### SANGEETH SARATHY ONLINE



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## Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar Award: Dr. Suresh Vaidyanathan

This year, the 'Gottuvadyam' Narayana Iyengar Award for Musical Excellence is set to honour Dr. Suresh Vaidyanathan, affectionately known as 'Ghatam' Suresh.

Growing up in Triplicane, Suresh cherishes memories of the vibrant classical music concerts held at Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha and The Hindu High School in the mid-1970s. His musical journey flourished with his first significant stage performance during K.J. Yesudas's concert, where his guru, the Padma Bhushan awardee T.V. Gopalakrishnan, accompanied legends like violin maestro T.N. Krishnan on stage. "I owe it to my guru for granting me the opportunity to perform alongside these maestros," he gratefully recalls.

"Following the Sabha's relocation from Triplicane to Vidya Bharathi in Mylapore, I have remained a regular performer here. The Sabha's secretaries ensured harmony among performers and valued my input. Their warm interaction with artists deserves special recognition," he applauds, reflecting on the Sabha's December music festival.

Receiving the award named after 'Gottuvadyam' Narayana Iyengar, a revered maestro, fills Suresh with pride. "Ghatam is a 'vishesha vadyam' and it holds unique significance as it is crafted solely from the Pancha bhutas (five elements of nature). It stands as the only instrument made entirely of clay, is environmentally friendly, and can be hailed as an organic instrument. Its namam (name), rupam(form), and Utpadanam (creation) have remained largely unchanged since the instrument came into existence," he passionately explains. "Also, this instrument is referred to philosophically in concepts beyond religion," he adds.

"The authentic styles in Ghatam playing belong to Pazhani Krishna Iyer and Umayalpuram Narayana Iyer. I was fortunate to be a disciple of the latter for six years in a 'gurukula vasam' setting. This award holds profound significance for me and my instrument," Suresh concludes with heartfelt gratitude.

