

Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam

Carnatic Vocal Concert (Chamber Music) (April 22, 2006)

A Review by Rasikan

Usha Bala, SRUTI President, stated that as an experiment, SRUTI has initiated chamber music concerts. The idea, if I correctly understood her remarks, is to invite a musician of repute to perform for a comparatively small audience in a rather informal setting without sacrificing the classical content of the program.

In keeping with this objective, Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam gave a concert at the premises of J&B Software, Blue Bell on April 22, 2006. She was accompanied by Gowri Ramakrishnan on the violin and Akshay Anathapadmanabhan on the mridangam. Many in the audience sat on the floor almost within shake_hands distance from the artists yielding a very informal atmosphere.

Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam has a very pleasant voice and was in a good form. After a brisk Abogi varnam *Evari bodhana*, she sang *Vinayaka* in Hamsadwani, a veenai Kuppaiyer kriti in Adi talam. The neraval and swarams at Kalilo rajasa in the charanam of *Manasa yetulo* (Malayamarutham, Rupakam, Thyagaraja) were crisply rendered. Vijayalakshmi sang a good Varali alapana preceding *Mamava Meenakshi*, the Dikshitar kriti in Chapu talam.

The next three pieces were rare or “not so often heard” kritis: *Enda vidamakhilum*, a Oothukadu Venkatakavi composition in Kambhodhi, Adi; *Sarasadala* in Saramathy, Adi, Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar; and Gopalakrishna Bharathy’s *Edo theriyamal* in Hamir Kalyani, Rupakam.

The central piece of the concert was Thyagaraja’s ever green kriti in Mohanam, *Nannu Palimpa*. The post thani period included the Annamacharya piece, *Garudagamana*, in Hindolam, a Azvar pasuram, *Pachai malai* rendered as a viruttam in Nadanamakriya, Kapi, Yamuna Kalyani and Lalith ending up with a Kabir Das bhajan in Lalith.

The concert concluded after a Purandara Dasa piece *Thunga* in Neelambari and the Brindawani tillana of Balamurali Krishna. It was an enjoyable concert made more so because of the close interaction between the artists and the audience.