



SRUTI NOTES

A Publication of SRUTI
The India Music & Dance Society
Celebrating Twenty years of service to the community

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Sundari Balakrishnan
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Rangaprabhu Parthasarathy
781-964-8118

Ramaa Nathan
610-668-3691

Rungun Nathan

Web: <http://www.sruti.org>
Email: sruti@sruti.org

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From the Editor's Desk...

The Thyagaraja Aradhana event of March 4 launched the spring season of the year for Sruti. The group rendition of the Pancharatna Kritis led by Smt. Prabha Subramanyan, Smt. Sumathi Sarangan, and Smt. Sushila was as always in great form. It was heartwarming to see some newer faces on the stage. Each year, we witness the dedication that goes into the practice of Carnatic Music by participants at all levels at the individual level. It gives us great pleasure to be part of a community that encourages this dedication. The young participants mature as they graduate to Saint Thyagaraja's compositions that offer greater challenge in ragas, talas and sangatis (variations). Seasoned practitioners offer their rendition of selected Thyagaraja Kritis to the Saint's memory. In addition, we celebrate the hard work put in by all the teachers in the area. The day culminated with a concert by Sri.B.Balasubrahmanyam, accompanied by Sri. K.S. Mani on the violin and Sri David Nelson on the mrudangam.

This edition of Sruti notes carries a number of reviews of concerts: Smt. Sowmya's concert dedicated to the memory Sri Sankaran, Smt.Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam's concert which marked the launch of a Chamber Concert series, and the recent vocal concert by Ranjani and Gayatri. Sri Rasikan's parable is thought provoking. We have included an article by Preeti Arunapuram, a young Carnatic Music practitioner and enthusiast. She elaborates on her participation in the competition organized by the Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana Committee. Some notable events relevant to the world of performing arts are also included in this edition.

The Library committee would like to take this opportunity to request your thoughts on matters related to the performing arts and also notable community events. We would especially like to hear from young people. We request parents to encourage students or enthusiasts of music and dance to put their thoughts down on paper. Our spring season ended with a wonderful well-attended concert by Dr. Balamurali Krishna. We wish you all a great summer. This year is the 20th anniversary year of the founding of Sruti. The Board of Directors are continuing to work on events to mark the occasion. Please stay tuned.....

The Library Committee

The opinions expressed by the contributors of articles and reviews are published in a spirit of openness of communication and freedom of expression. They do not necessarily reflect the views of Sruti's Board or its members.

President's Note

Dear Friends

This is the twentieth anniversary of Sruti, and over the years we have evolved in to an esteemed presenting organization of Indian classical music and dance. The expectations from the organization by the members as well as visiting artists are rising and I thank the BOD and volunteers who are meeting the challenge.

The year started with the Thyagaraja Aradhana and evening concert was rendered by B.Balasubramanian from Wesleyan University. The quality of children's rendition was very good. Sruti collected a small registration fee from the participants to cover the material cost involved.

The Pancharatna Kritis singing group started the program. However, the size of the group is reduced to a handful of people. The Utsava Sampradya Kritis group ceases to exist. Sruti has recruited couple of local teachers to teach Pancharatna Kritis & Utsava Sampradya Kritis to add some new faces to the group. Please contact the BOD if you are interested.

The spring season started with Sowmya's vocal concert followed by a Mandolin duo concert by Shrinivas and Rajesh. We also had Ranjani & Gayatri Vocal concert in May. The spring season ended with a vocal concert by Dr. Balamurali Krishna. All these concerts were well received by the audience and we are pleased with our spring concert season.

We also introduced a new chamber style programs for limited audience. Our maiden Chamber concert was presented by Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam and was a great success.

Sruti is celebrating the 20th year anniversary throughout the year by presenting quality programs by high caliber artists and for the fall season we have a very exciting lineup. We are starting with a vocal concert by Sudha Raghunathan on Sept 23rd followed by a Bharathanatyam program by Priyadarshini Govind on Oct 7th. On October 28th we are having Anoushka Shankar's concert at Pearlman Theatre in collaboration with Kimmel Center followed by a grand symphonic work with South Indian ensemble and western classical orchestra by Jayamangala School of Music and Dance, Washington DC on November 11th. The funding for some of the above programs are provided by the Philadelphia Music Project and Philadelphia Presenting Project.

We look forward to seeing all of you for the upcoming events. We thank you for your continued support throughout the year. Please feel free to send your feedback or any concerns you may have to President@sruti.org

Usha Balasubramanian
President
For the Board of Directors, Sruti

A Parable

Rasikan

Once there lived in a small village in the southern part of India a simple man. Simple he was as a man but a giant as composer of classical music in the Carnatic idiom. He was a genius who composed songs mostly in praise of various deities including his Ishta Devatha, Sri Rama. They were called keertanas and/or kritis. Some of these were simple enough that they could be sung in bhajanas or utsavas by folks not particularly adept in music but who enjoyed singing. A large percentage of his oeuvre consisted of kritis which would require a decent level of training in Carnatic music (CM). They consisted of kritis which were deceptively simple to highly sophisticated and weighty ones requiring years to master. And then there were five (referred to as gems) which only the best trained artists could do justice to.

And so it came to pass that over a period of time his fame spread and people came from distant towns and villages not only to hear these musical masterpieces but also to learn from the master himself. These disciples in turn taught the music to others. After a time, other composers tried to emulate him and composed on their own, following the pattern set by him. However, it happened that CM remained essentially the music as developed by the great man.

And so it passed that after living a long simple material life but leaving a rich treasure of music, the man died. And his years were eighty.

And the disciples and other admirers were forlorn, but vowed to continue his legacy. First in small groups and then in ever increasing numbers, they visited the village where he had lived and on the anniversary of his death performed aradhana. This included rendering of the wonderful keertanas and kritis composed by him. Then some people remembered the five gems and suggested that they should be rendered in group singing.

And anyone who could sing or play on an instrument came to pay their homage. And the novice and the highly talented professional came and in humble reverence performed for a few minutes each and paid their respect to the master.

And people donated generously to the organizers so anyone who came for the celebration, the lowly or the rich, was given free food.

And thus grew the tradition of the annual celebration at the site where his mortal remains were interred.

And so it came to pass that a number of people from the area moved to other parts of the country. Many of them also immigrated to England, Canada, Australia and the United States of America. But wherever they lived they remembered the music created by the great composer. And they gathered every year at a time close to his death anniversary and performed aradhana.

And so it came to pass that in the Diaspora, organizations sprouted up in London, Melbourne, Toronto, Cleveland and Philadelphia and other cities. They propagated the rich musical legacy left by the great master. And these organizations celebrated the aradhana providing space for people who wanted to pay homage to the great soul and render the songs in singles or in groups. Children, young musicians and adults prepared for the occasion and they all participated with enthusiasm mixed with reverence. And in keeping with the tradition in the native land the organizations provided free food on the day of the aradhana.

And so the great master, perched in his high place in the Heavens, looked at these celebrations which remembered him and honored his music. And he hailed his Ishta Devata and exclaimed, "Oh, Rasika Siromani, you made my name and fame shine far and wide and in distant countries. Oh, Dasarathe, how could I ever repay my debt to you." And he felt gratified and happy.
And he shed a tear of joy.

And so it came to pass that as the diasporas grew the organizations run almost completely by volunteers also grew. And they were praised for making it possible for the lovers of CM to come up every year and sing the kritis of the master and pay their homage.

And he felt gratified and happy.

And then it came to pass that as the organizations run almost completely by volunteers grew, and the number of participants increased, the organizations required that any one who wanted to perform must tell them ahead of time.

And the financial burden also grew. So they started collecting donations or charging for food.

And then it came to pass that one organization run completely by volunteers in a corner of the U.S. of A. decided that in order to perform at the aradhana one should not only tell them ahead of time but also pay in order to perform.

And so perched in his high place in the Heavens, the great master looked down at this.
And he introspected and exclaimed, "Oh, mind, tell me truly, does wealth produce pleasure?"
And he felt a twinge of sadness.
And he shed a tear.

About the author: An ardent admirer and lover of Carnatic music, Rasikan has been a regular contributor to Sruti Notes and other publications of Sruti.

Thyagaraja Experience in Cleveland

Preeti Arunapuram

This year, I attended the annual Thyagaraja Aradhana festival in Cleveland, Ohio. In addition to attending the concerts, I also went there to participate in the carnatic vocal competition in a couple of categories. Although a bit nervous, I thoroughly enjoyed the competitions and I felt that it was a wonderful experience for me. During the long car ride from Philadelphia to Cleveland, all I could think of was the competition. On the day of the competition, I kept practicing the songs to myself, kept my fingers crossed and hoped that I would do well. I was very nervous! Finally, we got to the place and I felt so anxious that I could actually feel my knees trembling. Before the competitions began, we were led into a big auditorium, where we listened to some speeches by the organizers and renowned artists. One of the speeches was by Dr. N. Ramani, the famous flutist. He said that he was proud to see us participating in the competition and getting exposed to Carnatic music. His kind words encouraged me and I was really in the mood to sing! We then waited for the competitions to begin. They finally did and soon, I was outside practicing my three songs over and over again to keep them in good shape. For the competition, all the participants had to prepare three songs. The judges would choose one of the songs for us to sing. Some time passed and I was asked to be prepared to sing because there were only two or three singers before it was my turn. Nervously, I stepped into the room, half-shyly and half-excitedly. I began to shiver with immense excitement. After listening to one of the participants, I became more anxious. She was so good! Something else struck me at the moment as well; I realized that I was going to be singing in front of a big artist that I enjoy listening to, Neyveli Santhanagopalan. It was such an honor to sing in front of him. However, this made me all the more tense. At last, my turn came and I sat down, poised to sing whatever the judges asked me to sing. I was hoping that they wouldn't pick the song, Vidajalathura in raga Janaranjani, that I had the most trouble with; unfortunately, they picked that song. I started to sing. At first, my voice was a little shaky, but I managed to sing the best I could. But at last, I did finish, pleased that the song actually came out much better than I used to sing it during practice. I stepped out of the room, encouraged by my performance that I would also do well in the swarakalpana division of the competition as well. Unfortunately, while I was singing my swarakalpana in the raga Madyamavati, everything was going fine until I was distracted by a noise that came from outside the room. Nevertheless, I still thought that I did okay and was happy with my performance. What an exciting day! The next day came and I got to enjoy a performance by Sudha Raghunathan, one of my favorite artists to listen to. Altogether, my trip was one that I will never forget.

I know that I will return to Cleveland and continue to participate there. Since I was a very little child, I have been inspired by music. I used to listen to Sudha Raghunathan CD's when I was only one year old and I used to try to sing along with the recording! My mother started teaching me some Carnatic music when I reached the age of four or five. At the age of

eight, I started to learn Carnatic music from Mrs. Lata Suresh who is in the West Chester area. I have enjoyed the experience of learning from her and have been learning from her for the past seven years. During the years that I have developed a love for Carnatic music and that love has been continuing to grow. Not only Carnatic music, but I have developed the same kind of liking for western violin. My family has a very musical background and we all enjoy music in our everyday lives. I am glad that I am learning Carnatic music; I like it very much!

About the author: Preeti Arunapuram is a 8th grade student in the West Chester Area School District in Pennsylvania. Preeti has been learning Carnatic vocal Music from Mrs. Lata Suresh for over 5 years. She made several stage performances in nearby temples and participated in several competitions. She won first place in junior vocal competition conducted by India Association of Performing Arts in New Jersey. She also plays Suzuki style violin and is a member of her West Chester Area School District's Select String orchestra. Besides music, Preeti loves reading and playing tennis.

Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam

Chamber Music - A Review (Apr 22, 2006)

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 Kup-paiyer 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.

S. Sowmya

A Review (Apr 8, 2006)

T. Parasaran

The concert was held in the Bharatiya Temple auditorium, on April 8th, in memory of Mr. S. Sankaran, a staunch supporter and well wisher of Sruti. Since he was an ardent admirer of Carnatic music, especially G.N. Balasubramanian (GNB) Sowmya dedicated the concert to both. She was accompanied on the violin by R.K. Shiramkumar and on the mridangam by Neyveli Narayanan.

The concert started off with the lively Kedaragowla Varnam, "Sami Daya Chuda" followed by the only kriti "Kalala Nerchina" in the Raga Deepakam by Sri Thyagaraja. After a short Alapana in Asaveri, Sowmya sang Thyagaraja's "Ye panikko Janma". It was followed by Muthu Thandavar's "Adikondar". Next there was a nicely rendered Alapana in Andolika with the kriti, "Raga sudha" which set the tempo for the evening. After Kamas Raga and Purvi Kalyani she sang GNB's "Nee charanambujamu" in Keervani. This was an interesting piece.

Though the start of Alapana in Kambodhi was rather tentative, Sowmya picked up a sincere elaboration of Ragam and Tanam culminating in the pallavi, "Thillai eesanai", a pallavi made popular by GNB. Shiramkumar's violin rendering of Kambodhi Raga and the Thani of Neyveli were quite pleasing. The post pallavi pieces, "Vagaladi", a javali in Behag, a kirtana "ninnaye" in Sindhu Bhairavi, a Kavadi Chindu, "Chenni Nagara Vasam" and a Thillana rounded off the concert nicely.

The acoustics in the hall was good for the most part but sometimes the instruments tended to be quite loud and occasionally even drowned the vocalist. In my opinion, a livelier mix of Thalams would have made the concert a memorable one. All the same it was an audience pleasing, well performed concert.

About the author: T.Parasaran is a retired chemist who is interested in listening to all classical music forms and especially Carnatic music because of his origin from Tiruvapur !

Ranjani & Gayathri
A Review (May 21, 2006)
Yeshwant Prabhu

Ranjani and Gayatri started their concert with Tiruvottiyur Thyagayya's majestic varnam Chalamela in the raga Darbar. The clarity of their pronunciation of the sahitya of the kriti, their diction, and the smoothness of their rendition was extraordinary from the beginning to the end. The violinist, H. N. Bhaskar, played very well; the smoothness of his bowing matched the smoothness of the vocalists. The mridangist, K. Arun Prakash, played with restraint, contributing to an impressive and flawless beginning. Next they sang Muthuswami Dikshitar's Swaminatha Paripalaya in the raga Nattai, with superb swaraprasthara in the end. The cascading notes flowed like the torrential waters of the Niagara Falls. Although I was a bit overwhelmed by the gush and speed of their swaras, it was, nevertheless, very pleasant to hear. Next Ranjani sang a beautiful alapana in raga Chakravaka. It was methodical and well developed. And she brought out the ragaswaroopa of Chakravaka smoothly and effortlessly, expounding the raga and building the alapana with extraordinarily beautiful sangatis. The violinist rendered the alapana very well also. I must say that it is not easy to shine while playing for great singers of Ranjani and Gayatri's caliber. But Bhaskar managed to impress with a smooth, flawless rendition. The sisters sang Tyagaraja's kriti Sugunamule with bhaava in very appropriate madhyama kaala. They sang kalpana swaras here also in their trademark brisk flow. Then Gayatri sang an astonishing but brief alapana in Mukhari, followed by a soulful rendering of Neelakanta Sivan's kriti Endraikku Sivakripai. I have heard them sing this twice before – in Chennai and Bridge Water, New Jersey – but I will never get tired of listening to this kriti. Fortunately the mridangist knew how to support the vocalists for this song: by playing the bridangam to the absolute minimum, so that at times the rasikas barely heard it. His play was as it should be for this kriti.

They chose Thyagaraja's Etaa unnara in Kalyani as the main item of the concert. Gayatri's alapana was brilliant, especially in the higher octave. The violinist too shined with an excellent alapana. The tani aavartana was pleasant and subdued. Next they sang Thyagaraja's kriti Vararaaga laya in Chenchu Kambodhi at a very brisk speed, perhaps as a warm up to the Ragam Tanam Pallavi. But that doesn't quite explain why almost every musician who sings this kriti sings it exceedingly fast. (Thyagaraja's Sarasa saamadhana in Kapinrayani, Telisi ramachandra in Poornachandika, Nenarunchi nannu in Maalavi, and Nagumomu ganaleni in Abheri, too, almost always, are sung at excessive speed; the question is: Why?) Is it appropriate to plead with Rama very fast, as if to tell him "you better hurry!", or should the vocalist plead taking time, without rushing, to conform to the meaning of the song?

They chose Hindolam raga for their Ragam Tanam and Pallavi. Both Ranjani and Gayatri took turns in rendering elaborate and exquisite alapanas. Mere words fail to describe the heavenly beauty of their alapanas. Rare, delicate, extraordinary and scintillating sangatis flowed almost continuously,

overwhelming the rasikas. I barely had enough time to comprehend, grasp, and appreciate the beauty of the sangatis. As wonderful as their alapanas were, I believe the effect on the listener would have been even more profound had the sisters given a little bit more time between sangatis to allow the intricate sangatis to properly sink into the minds of the rasikas. For pallavi they chose Dikshitar's Neerajakshi Kamakshi, which I thought was most appropriate, because I can not think of a more beautiful kriti in that raga. There is a saying: For sheer beauty Merusamana in Mayamalawagowla, Neerajakshi in Hindola".

For the last part of the concert they chose Purandara Dasa's Jagododddhaarana, and a Tamil folk song. For me the surprise of the concert was their rendition of Meera's mellifluous bhajan: Paayoji maine Ram Ratan Dhana Paayo. It reminded me of Bhimsen Joshi's recording of the same song forty years ago. Saint Tukaram's Marati Abhang: Tujhe naama maata was soul-stirring. At the request of a rasika, they sang a Tillana in raga Paras at the end.

Their sruti shudda, swarashuddha and sahitya enunciation were impeccable. The concert was laden with bhaava and well-balanced. Also, the sisters matched evenly, which is a rarity in duo singing, and their voices blended and complemented one another. And I dare say that even the most pernickety of the rasikas found nothing to pick on in this concert.

Their Hindolam was still ringing in my head at work in my office the next Monday! It was an extra-ordinary and most memorable concert that I will remember for a very long time.

A word must be said about the meticulous attention to details that the organizers gave at this concert. The ticket counter was set, the tables were arranged, and the volunteers were waiting graciously for the arrival of the rasikas almost an hour before the concert! This rarely happens at functions like this. And the concert started on time.

About the author: Yeshwant Prabhu is a Chemist and an aspiring vocalist. He learnt Carnatic vocal music from Flutist Sri Gopalakrishna Iyyer and Composer/Vocalist Sri T.N.Bala.

Gana Kuyilgal
A Review (May 21, 2006)
Sangeetha Priya

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, Sruti sponsored a delightful concert by the upcoming young sisters Ranjani and Gayathri.

The concert opened up with the majestic Darbar ragam, a varnam in Adhi thalam – Chalemela. They moved onto another 'gambeera' ragam, Nattai and sang Swaminatha Paripalayam, one of Dikshitar's kritis, which set a nice pace for the concert. The next song they selected was one of my favorites by Saint Thyagaraja 'Sugunamule' in Chakravaham

ragam. Ranjani beautifully started the song by singing alapana and concluded it with swara prastharams.

The sisters then proceeded to sing a kriti by Neelakanta Sivan in Mukhari ragam. Gayathri was precise as she was brief in alapana. The tamil padam was set in a slow tempo. They started the song from anupallavi and then went to sing the pallavi. It was moving and exactly how Mukhari ragam should be rendered.

It was smooth sailing from then on. Kalyani ragam alapana by Gayatri brought about a whole minute applause from the audience. They selected another Thyagaraja kriti 'Eta vuna ra'. Nirval was done for 'Seetha Gowri' for the first time in this concert. The swara execution again was brilliant by both of them, which was followed by Arun Prakash on the mru-dangam very well. His anticipation and reproduction of the swarams on the mrudangam enhanced the singing even more. He followed the song with thani avarathanam and rendered it quite well. H. N. Bhasakar very ably accompanied the sisters on the violin and claimed a few applauses from the audiences as well.

Ranjani & Gayatri then sang a brisk filler in 'Chenchu Kambhoji' ragam, a Thyagaraja composition before going into the RTP in Hindolam, which was exceptional. The way the ragam was elaborated by both of them was phenomenal one step at a time. Gayatri's remarkable display of range stunned the audience and drew enthusiastic applause every-time. Pallavi again was split between the two of them. Ragamalika swarams were enchanting in ragams Amrita Varshini, Sahana, Abheri and Madhuvanti.

After the concert spiraled onto a momentum it was hard to bring it to down – to reconcile to settle into what is known as the 'thukkada' part of the concert. They once again made a very nice selection of lighter songs to conclude the concert. There was a Purandara Dasa song Jagadodharana in Karnataka Kapi, a Kavadi chindu in tamil, a very popular Meera bhajan 'Payoji miyne Rama Rathan' in Misra Pahadi and then an Abhang in Mand ragam. Upon request, they concluded the concert with a thillana in ragam Paras. The mru-dangist and the violinist ably accompanied these very talented young ladies.

We can look forward to many more delightful concerts by these two sisters and a bright future. It is quite evident that many more accolades will follow what they already have. All in all it was a gratifying experience attending this particular concert.

About the author: Sangeetha Priya is long time life member of Sruti and a devoted fan of Carnatic music. She is also a long time supporter of Sruti.

A Note from the Resources and Development Committee

Throughout the year and behind the scenes, your Resources & Development (R&D) Committee constantly strives to get funds for SRUTI programs by putting together grant applications to major funding organizations in the Philadelphia area. These applications are very competitive in nature and a lot of work goes into their preparation to ensure their purpose, quality, feasibility and the like. In addition, the R&D Committee also tries to build strategic relationships with funding and presenting organizations both locally and outside the Philly area. These relationships are crucial for long-term success and growth within the community environment that Sruti has to function in.

Just to recap, here is a list of R&D Committee activities and achievements since we took office in December 2005

1. Philadelphia Music Project (PMP) Grant Award: \$24,500 for 2006-2007
2. Philadelphia Presenting project (PPP) Grant Award: \$3200 for 2006
3. Rohm & Haas: Corporate donations of \$2000 for 2007

Several other grant applications have been submitted and we await decisions from the funding organizations. We have continued to build relationships with groups such as Philadelphia Cultural Alliance (PCA), Drexel University, International House, PMP, PPP and the Annenberg Center at University of Pennsylvania.

Finally, I would like to share with you some complimentary feedback we got from DA. As I wrote above, we were granted \$8000 to fund a Manipuri-Odissi Dance performance, which will be presented by Shreyasi Dey and her troupe sometime next year. We spoke to Mr. Bill Bissell of Dance Advance and as he explained to how applications are evaluated, we realized that the process itself is very intense. Last year Dance Advance received approximately 63 applications, each of which went through 5-6 rounds of review and evaluation. SRUTI's application was found to be very competitive and, well above all criteria in the very first round! The review panelists commended SRUTI on submitting a very well fleshed out application and also for bringing exciting projects which have both a formal as well as an educational aspect to our viewers thereby increasing audience interest. Our scores in all categories were very high and, to our credit no category demonstrated any weakness! They also had very positive feedback about our website. These are indeed very flattering comments and we feel we are on the right track. SRUTI, as a cultural organization, has earned a reputable name within the funding and cultural community in the city and the country at large and we are very proud of this achievement.

Uma Prabhakar, Chairperson,
For The Resources & Development Committee

News Buzz...

M.S. Subbulakshmi Statue At Tirupati

A 14-foot high bronze statue, weighing about 4000 kg, of the legendary Carnatic musician, Bharat Ratna Late Smt. M.S.Subbulakshmi, was unveiled by the Andhrapradesh Chief Minister, Dr.Y.S.Rajasekhara Reddy at a traffic island in the temple town of Tirupati on Sunday.

Born on September 16, 1916 the Carnatic Music legend had received a large number of awards during her illustrious career spanning more than 50 years. India's top civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, was conferred on her in 1998. She passed away in Chennai on Dec.11, 2004. Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA) Chairman, Mr. B.Karunakara Reddy announced that Mr.N.Nageswara Rao, TTD Board Member, has offered Rs.11 lakhs to meet the entire cost of making the MS statue in a sitting posture and holding the Veena in her hand.

Source: <http://www.tirupatitimes.com>

Controversy Over Saint Thyagarja's House

Radha Surya

A controversy has developed in Tamil Nadu over the demolition of the house of the saint composer Thyagaraja located in Thiruyaiyaru in Thanjavur district. The demolition was con-

ducted under the auspices of the Sri Thyagabrahma Mahotsava Sabha as the initial step in the proposed construction of a memorial in honor of the saint composer. The house was considered to be too dilapidated to merit preserving. In its stead, plans were made for building a memorial with a library consisting of books on Thyagaraja as well as video and audiocassettes and a hall in which the works of Shyama Sas-trigal and Muthswamy Dikshithar were to be kept. The memorial was to be built in the form of a tambura and was to house a bronze image of the composer.

Many music lovers have been outraged by the demolition of the original dwelling of the saint composer. A public interest litigation petition asking for the restoration of the original structure has been submitted to the Madras High Court by Macherla Diwakar. Diwakar says that the surviving houses on the street can provide model plans for the restoration of the demolished structure. In response to the petition the Madras High Court has issued orders staying further demolition of the house. The petitioner has requested an injunction whereby the central government and the Archaeological Survey of India can take possession of the site and restore the house to its original form. Whether the status of a national monument will be conferred on the house remains to be seen.

Sources: *Thyagaraja's house to be converted into a memorial*
<http://www.hindu.com/2006/01/03/stories/2006010304170500.htm>

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<http://kutcherbuzz.com/news/20060512/thyagaraja.asp>

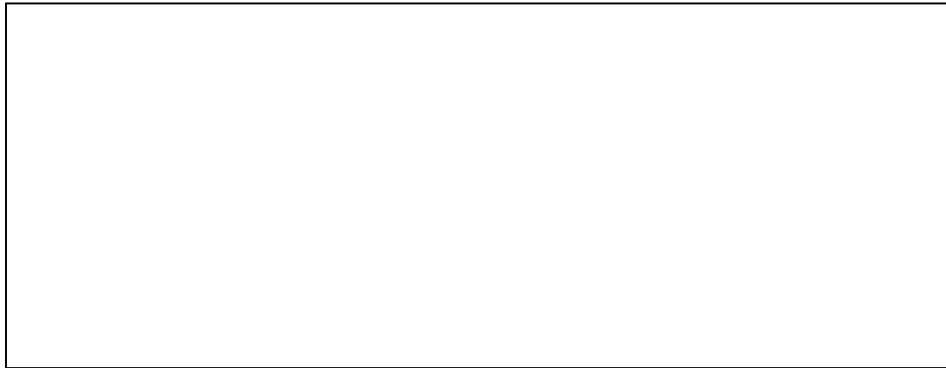


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SRUTI
The India Music & Dance Society
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- 2) Oct 7 BharathaNatyam Dance Performance by
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- 3) Oct 28 Sitar Concert by Anoushka Shankar
- 4) Nov 11 Ensemble Presentation by the Jayamangala Group
- 5) Dec 9 Sruti Day, Annual General Body Meeting and Elections