

metroPLUS

THE HINDU

Get your fix of pulissery and paalada payasam at these Onam sadya lunches P2





Sanjana Ganesh sanjana.g@thehindu.co.in

wenty years ago, Yogi B, a young Malaysian Tamil television executive, arrived in Chennai for the first time. The sights and sounds of autos, tea shops and the city's people are still fresh in his mind. To say that he was in awe, is putting it mildly.

"People don't understand but as a child of the diaspora that read the Thevaram, watched Tamil films and heard songs from here, it felt I was finally touching the soil of my origin. Everything felt like an absolute culture shock. Neurons burst. I could not close my mouth. I saw Tamil Nadu in all its glory and variety. It was a magical, sensory overload," he

Over the years, this rapper and music producer behind blockbuster hits like 'Madai Thirandu' and 'Engeyum Eppothum', says that his relationship with the city has transformed with years of flying in and out for performances and recordings. The romance however, is unshaken. "Makkal Inga thangamanavangam (People have heart of gold)," he says.

It is this romance and years of cross-cultural exchange between the Tamil diasporic community across the world, that the headliner and his long-time collaborator Emcee Jesz will bring on stage at the second edition of *The Hindu* Made of Chennai Food and Music Festival 2024.

The two-day event marks the end of The Hindu's 40-day Made of Chennai celebration that put the city's numerous facets under the spotlight in a set of events that showcased pageantry including cinema by the beach and an archival photo exhibit at the newspaper's head office on Anna Salai. At this festival featuring 10 acts and 40 food stalls, on September 14 and 15 at Island Grounds, watch performers like Arivu and The Ambassa Band; Haricharan and the Drums Kumaran Collective featuring Sireesha Bhagavatula; Maalavika Sundar; Motta Maadi Music; Paul Jacob's Folk Agenda and Gowwli, the band.

High Octane Industrial Rock featuring JHANU, promises raw energy and explosive music, says Harkirat Singh Sangha (Harry), the

Akila Kannadasan

hen she was given a

Nagapattinam-based A

DSLR camera,

Mahalakshmi automatically

trained her lens on her fellow

fisherwomen. She documented

the lives of young widows from

struggled to fend for their families

with the little they made selling

recalls the 34-year-old mother of

the fishing community, who

fish. "I shot a lot of photos,"

two, speaking about the

three-month workshop by



Chennai's sounds and flavours

come together at *The Hindu*'s Made of Chennai Food and Music Festival

bassist of the band. Although popular bands like Justice and Rammstein have been their inspiration, Harry says that Ilaiyaraaja finds his way into their minds while creating music. "Our vision is to see crowds till the horizon when we perform," he says. Office Gaana from On the

Streets of Chennai on the other hand, will blend storytelling, office drama and reliability in a peppy, gaana-style

format, says Keerthivasan Raghuram (Monk). Expect covers of popular Tamil songs and originals from this band that came together because someone in their omce decided to play a forgotten dholak. "We are 200% excited,"







Monk's enthusiasm is not his own. Several other acts encompassing genres like hip hop, gaana, Carnatic-fusion, folk and rock, in all their Tamil glory, will find ways to convey the resplendent sounds of Chennai. Take your pick.

Finding the essence

Food maketh a festival. It is why Shabnam Kamil and her organisation Social Bee, have

> decided to populate the food stalls at the festival with only brands from the city. Her second stint of curating this event is full of learnings. It is legacy brands like C Kunhiraman General Stores (famous for

selling mango ice cream and mango milk, year-round), Gopaul Dairy (with house-made butter and iam) and KGN Arifa selling paya biryani, that sell out in a matter of hours.



September 14

- Carnatic Folk Rock by Maalavika Sundar
- DJ Suman and beat box Office Gaana from On the
- streets of Chennai Yogi B
- Kavithai Gundar by Emcee Jesz

Motta Maadi Music

- September 15 Gowwli band
- Paul Jacob's Folk Agenda • High Octane Industrial Rock
- featuring JHANU Arivu and the Ambassa band
- Haricharan the Drums Kumaran Collective featuring Sireesha Bhagavatula

"People might want to try the early morning biryanis of Pulianthope or the grape juice at Kunhiraman but may not be able to travel the distance for it. The food festival provides all these Chennai delicacies in a single place. That is perhaps its greatest USP," she says.

Akilesh Baskaran, behind the 99-vear-old Kunhiraman General Stores, says that they were sold out in two hours last year. This year, the cold, tart yet sweet, and delightfully purple grape juice, will be made in excess to cater to the demands of the festival. He is prepared and will be introducing new flavours like black currant to the mix.

Shabnam says that no two biryanis, grills, dosas or butter buns will be like any other at the festival. She has been careful about avoiding repeats, she says.

"This is where our paya biryani, made with tender, succulent meat comes in. We serve it with a pudina chutney and have been able to hold a steady crowd for three generations now. It is different from the other biryanis in the city. Honestly, we did not expect to sell out last year. This year, the production has been amped up," says Syed Moinudeen S of KGN Arifa, who assists his father

> in the business. The festival will also have stalls serving Mexican tostadas, iced coffee,

halwa, sandwiches and ice creams, besides the staple South Indian fare at the event. Like Yogi B, prepare to be in awe and fall in love with Chennai once again.

The Hindu Made of Chennai Food and Music Festival is on September 14 and 15 at Island Grounds 5pm onwards. Entry is free but participants must register at madeofchennai.thehindu.com.

The Hindu Made of Chennai Food and Music Festival is held in association with ACKO, Beepkart. In partnership with: GCC, GCTP, TTDC and Namma Marina. Associate Partner: Ather, Akshayakalpa. Expert Partner: Social Bee. Artist Partner: ACTC. Radio Partner: BIG FM. Happiness partner: On the streets of Chennai. Event partner: Torque



Scan the OR code to register for the food and



Snapshots of the sea Photographs tracking the lives of fisherwomen on display at the exhibit. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Women behind the camera

Fisherwomen-turned-photographers from Tamil Nadu and Odisha are all set to display their work at an exhibition in the city

independent photographer M Palanikumar, organised by the NGO Dakshin Foundation in 2023.

"I wondered what we would do with all of it," she says.

These photos are now set to be displayed at an exhibition at Lalita Kala Akademi in Chennai. Mahalakshmi is thrilled. "A lot of people will now

hear our stories," she says. Palanikumar says that the women – eight each from Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu and Ganjam from Odisha – shot over 25,000 photos over the three months. "We will be displaying around 350 of them at the exhibition. We hope the show opens up new opportunities for the women," he says, adding that a handful of them are now keen on taking up photography as a career.

This is the first time fisherwomen from the two states are

participating in an exhibition of such scale. "Most of them picked subjects to their liking, following them for several days," Palanikumar

points out. There are stories on coastal erosion -Pratima from Odisha has documented how her village was gradually eroded over a three-month span; on fishing, right from how fish is caught to how it is sold; how dried fish is made; on how women from the community play a key role in driving its economy. "There are plenty of landscape shots and colour; we can see how different the colour of the sea is in Odisha and Tamil Nadu," explains Palanikumar.

By documenting their lives, the women captured rare snippets that might be completely new to outsiders. "We get to experience their world through their eyes," says Palanikumar. "This results in something magical."

Palanikumar recalls the then Nagapattinam District Collector Johny Tom Varghese enquiring if the women can help document the various aspects of the city; some of them also contribute to a local NGO called Sneha. Palanikumar says: "The exhibition is a starting point; one that will show their work to the outside world."

Chronicles Of The Tides: Migration, Conflict, and Climate is on from September 23 to 29, 10am to 8pm, at Lalit Kala Akademi, Greams Road. Photographs on display are for sale.



The sound of music

The Madras Guild of Performing Arts (MGPA) junior ensemble, fondly called the #Shortz, is all set to present its first concert. Children between six and 13 will be performing songs across genres and styles including folk, pop and contemporary pieces. Atul Isaac, director of music, MGPA will be conducting the show. @The Music Academy, Mini Hall, September 14, 7pm. Tickets at www.mdnd.com. For details, call 9677046793.



The military quiz Colours of Glory Foundation,

Chennai, invites university students to participate in its annual Online Military History and Awareness Quiz 2024. A team of two members from the same institution can register by sending a text message to 944464385. Six top scoring

teams will be part of the finals. The last date to register is September 27 by noon. Entry is free. The online quiz will be held on September 28 (3pm to 3.15pm) and September 29 (11am to 1pm). For details, mail info@coloursofglory.org.

the nuts and bolts of

Sorgam,

Adyar This South Indian restaurant has been offering Onam sadya for the past eight years, and is popular with corporates who orders takeaway sadya in a box. The neatly packed boxes contain about 25 different items, and contain both red and white rice. Ada pradhaman and paal payasam will be served

with the sadya. Dine-in guests can also choose to add non-vegetarian starters such as mutton kola urundai, karuveppilai prawns and Kerala green chilli chicken to their meal. September 15 and 16, lunch only. Dine-in is priced at ₹800 and takeaway boxes are priced at ₹950. To pre-book your sadya, call

9677277900



Kappa Chakka Kandhari, Nungambakkam The chefs at this restaurant are all gearing up to serve an Onam sadya

comprising 26 items, offered as a dine-in meal and a takeaway meal. Every year, the restaurant brings in cooks from Kerala to prepare the vegetarian spread. Their payasams which include ada pradhaman, paalada pradhaman, chakka pradhaman and idichu pizhinja payasam are also available as a takeaway option priced at ₹900 per litre, and ₹450 for 500ml. A meal box that serves five priced at ₹6,750 can also be ordered. The meal box is packed in a stainless steel tiffin carrier and a hot box. Similarly, payasams are packed in stainless steel

The sadya will be served on September 14 and 15 at Marlen Mahal, Eco Park, Chetpet and is priced at ₹1,390. Pre-book your sadya slot, takeaway meals and payasams at www.kckonam.com. Call 9858591010 for more details.



Onamind on my mind

Wondering where to book sadya this **Onam?** Every year families and friends gather to dive into this sumptuous vegetarian spread, served on a banana leaf. Here is our round up of the best Chennai has to offer for Onam, this year.

Chitradeepa Anantharam



Hyatt Regency, Teynampet
At Foccacia, home chef Ammu Rebecca (of Rebecca's Kitchen) presents an Onam sadya with both non-vegetarian and vegetarian dishes. Hailing from Kollam, Ammu specialises in Central Travancore or North Kerala non-vegetarian cuisine, and meen pollichathu, chicken ullarthiyathu and prawn kizhi are on the menu. Travancore-style is milder on spices compared to other regions in Kerala, but uses coconut generously, says Rebecca. Seafood is prominent in this region and therefore her Chemmeen Kizhi (Prawn masala wrapped in banana leaf and then steamed or tawa fried) will be a signature dish from the region.

On September 15 for lunch. The non-vegetarian sadya is priced at ₹2,499 and vegetarian at ₹1,999. For bookings, call 9884369333.

Savera, Mylapore

Executive chef Jesu Lambert and his team have curated a special Onam sadya which will be served for four days at Savera's southern speciality restaurant, Malgudi, priced at ₹1,500 from September 12 to 15. The sadya features tradtional dishes, as well as kappa vada and parottas. At another restaurant Piano, an Onam brunch (₹1,750) will be available on September 15, from noon to 4pm.

The sadya at Malgudi is from September 12 to 15 from noon to 4 pm. For reservations, call 9710421422. For the Onam brunch at Piano, call 7550001168.



Aachi Namma Kitchen,

Anna Nagar

Apart from the elaborate Onam sadya spread which includes chakka pradhaman and sugiyan, a special kids sadya priced at ₹399 will also be available here. A highlight this year will be the snacks counter at the restaurant, serving ela ada, pazhampori, ullivada and unniappam from September 8 to 15 from 4pm to 7pm. The dinner (7.30pm to 9 pm) menu includes pathri, vattayappam, parotta, puttu, mappas and ishtew.

To pre-book your sadya lunch on September 14 and 15, contact 9715053407. Sadya is priced at ₹725 per person for dine-in and ₹825 for takeaway.

Kerala by the sea

This newly launched restaurant, designed like a shack, serves Kerala-style food and has a tea stall where you can savour kattan chai and pazhampori

<u>Chitradeepa Anantharam</u> chitradeepa.a@thehindu.co.in

fter a year of research, Nithyashree and Sourab launched Oru Kerala Story, a shack-style restaurant selling authentic cuisine from God's own

Their hunt for a suitable location led them to Uthandi. "We were keen on creating a shack-like ambience with wooden benches for seating and a tea shop at the entrance," says Nithya.

Over warm cumin-infused water, we peruse through the menu and settle on fried chicken doused in fragrant coconut oil. It is spicy, crisp and tasty. The surprise however is the prawn fry that arrives unassumingly and tastes delicious. The proprietors tell us that their seafood is sourced locally from Kovalam, on ECR.

For the mains, we choose the Kerala-style chicken biryani but as we await its arrival, Chef Ajay Mohan who hails from Kerala's Idukki district, recommends that we also try paal kappa where tapioca is cooked, mashed and blended with coconut milk and salt, with a hearty fish gravy on the side.

A bite, and we realise that the biryani does not stand a chance. Such is the preparation of this simple dish. "Paal kappa can be eaten with fish or beef, and it elevates the taste to another level," says Nithya.

How can we miss parotta at a Kerala restaurant?We are served flaky



parottas with

vegetable kurma and chicken gravy. For dessert, the Malayali staple paalada pradhaman comes in bowls, while a mango coconut pudding follows. The dessert portions are generous but not memorable.

Oru Kerala Story has a vegetarian thali meal on the weekends, which comes with four side dishes, sambar, rasam, moru (buttermilk) and payasam.

In the evenings, the owners say that it is common to spot several cars and bikes parked by their tea stall. "The place is very close to Uthandi beach and we see a lot of young people who stop by for tea and snacks between 4pm and 6pm," says Nithya. Pazhampori and masala vada are staples, but they plan to expand the menu gradually.

At Phase 1, Plot 16, VGP 2nd Street, Uthandi, ECR. Tea stall is open between 4pm and 6pm. Cost for two is approximately ₹1,000. Contact 8015312342. Sadya is priced at ₹999.



The interior of Oru Kerala Story ARRANGEMENT



Award winning Chef Thitid "Ton" Tassanakajohn from Thailand brings modern Thai flavours from his Michelin-star restaurant Le Du, to India

Prems Grama Bhojanam,

Well-known for their

millet and heritage rice-based menu

derived from rural South India, sadva here will have 25 classic

dishes served on a banana leaf. The restaurant is known for its red aval paal

chammandhi and kuru

milagu tomato rasam

and they serve samba

thooyamalli white rice

On September 14 and

15, ₹600 per person. To

payasam, thenga-manga

red rice and

for the sadya.

pre-book, call

9840062772

Adyar

Thanks a Ton

Priyadarshini Paitandy priyadarshini.p@tthehindu.co.in

hef Thitid "Ton" Tassanakajohn grew up watching his mother and grandparents cook. Yet he didn't follow the only piece of advice they gave him.

"They asked me not to open a restaurant," laughs the chef, who now has six restaurants under his belt, including the one Michelin star Le Du in Bangkok. "But when my grandmother walked into my first restaurant Le Du in 2013, she was proud of me. She always said, food is about cooking for people you love. The meal should make them come together and they should be happy. I am glad I am

able to do this," says the Thailand-based chef.

Interestingly, before donning the chef's whites, Thitid was an investment banker – for a month. Realising it was not the job for him, he quit and pursued an MBA in Hospitality Business, then studied at The Culinary Institute of America. He worked at formidable restaurants like Eleven Madison Park, The Modern, and the Michelin-star Jean Georges, where it became apparent to him that top places in the world care about local produce. "They are very proud about what is grown there. I saw farmers making

What's cooking? Dishes from Le Du; and Chef Ton. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

money from their produce... I wanted to do something similar for farmers in Thailand. The only way to do that would be to come back and start a restaurant," says

Thitid uses "100% local ingredients". Till about a decade ago, people thought Thai ingredients were not good enough, he says. In a bid to change that perception, he started working with farmers, giving them feedback, telling them what he wanted and how to level up their produce.

The 38-year-old chef is now travelling across India, bringing his culinary expertise to ITC hotels in Kolkata, Chennai, and Delhi. The chef and the hotel have similar ethos that highlight sustainability and culinary creations based on seasonal produce. The menu also draws inspiration from Thitid's family recipes and cookbooks of the royal kitchens.

The six-course meal will feature dishes and techniques that he

incorporates at Le Du. "It's a modern take on Thai cuisine. It is in the little details like how we cook the meat and fish, and at what temperature, how to make a stock and what to combine to make it complex with more flavours, how to present it...," he explains.

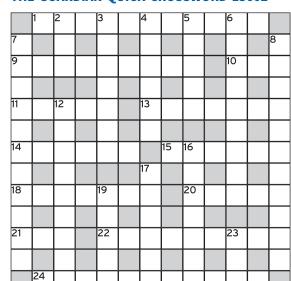
The menu is an amalgamation of comforting ingredients and unusual pairings. The dessert for example, combines banana and corn. Without disclosing too much, Thitid says he is most excited about the coconut vinegar that he is carting along from Bangkok. "It's fermented for four years, and we serve that as a sorbet. We added this to our menu two months ago and it has become very popular." Thitid is hopeful that the

diners in Chennai will enjoy this new style of Thai cuisine. He also wants to hear feedback. He seems calm about the whole process. "I felt a lot of pressure when I was younger. Every year, my restaurants are improving and doing something new. With that in

mind, I am not afraid of losing the star. We just do our best, challenge ourselves and move forward."

The meal is priced at ₹35,000 per head, including taxes. At the ITC Grand Chola in Chennai on September 14. Call 9600180582.

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13602



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Across

1 Book by Mary Shelley or Bram Stoker, for

example (6,5) 9 Tender regard (9)

10 Self-importance (3)

11 Palestinian governing authority of the Gaza Strip since 2007 (5)

13 Worry (7)

14 North American capital (6)

15 Clever (6) 18 Chinese breed of dog (4-3)

20 Belief system (5)

21 Rower (3) 22 Habitual internet user — cut nearby (anag) (9)

24 Lewis Carroll's fictional feline (8,3)

2 Not operational (3)

3 Hand-held metal cutter (7)

4 Cheerful (informal) (6) **5** Proprietor (5)

6 Responsible for carrying out agreed policies (9)

7 Catwalk exhibition (7,4)

8 Roy Rogers' footwear? (6,5)

To play The Guardian Hindu Cryptic crossword



12 Old venerable woman (9)

16 Bend back (7) 17 City formerly called Bombay (6)

19 Blood-sucking arachnids (5) 23 Heavy metal stove for cooking and heating (3)

Solution will appear in MetroPlus dated

September 19, 2024.







A scoop of Italy (Clockwise from far left) French toast; gelatos; an inside view of the cafe and double cheese omelette. JOHAN SATHYADAS



Gowri S

umb lips are perhaps an indicator of a good gelato experience. This means that multiple greedy spoonfuls have been consumed, albeit too quickly with great disregard for an imminent brain freeze. Who can be patient with a gelato? As per science, one should not. After all, it melts faster than the ice cream.

While on a quick drive chasing the coast, it is hard to miss the colourful stained glass facade of ECR's new Stellar Gelato & Cafe.

The route frequented by weekend holidaymakers has had no dearth of ice cream spots, but a good gelato is hard to come by. Which is precisely why Chef Chindi Varadarajulu of city-favourite Pumpkin Tales and restaurateur Arjun Sethuraman decided to partner with Italian Chef Mirko Tognetti to introduce ECR to a range of Italian frozen desserts, including the semifreddo: "Not an ice-cream cake, but a small sponge with meringue and mousse that is frozen, with a little bit of gelato," explains Chindi. This collaboration led Chindi and Arjun to Italy where they learned to make gelatos from scratch from Tognetti.

The menu boasts of some good old favorites from Pumpkin Tales, which is precisely where we start.

trozen

mousse moment

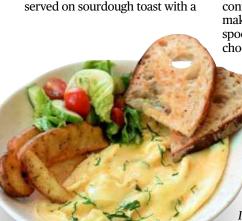
Stellar Gelato & Cafe is ECR's answer to Italian frozen desserts like a good gelato or a silky semifreddo

The pistachio gelato has a balanced creamy texture, and just the right flavour of pistachio, mildly sweet and combined with tiny chunks for the bite.

The strawberry sorbet makes a dramatic entry with its tart sweetness – not one bit overpowering, but every bit refreshing. If you are feeling experimental, stack it up with a scoop of the mango sorbet made from blast-frozen Banganapalli, and dig deep into a towering cone. The gelatos come in three sizes ranging from a single scoop to a three-scoop combination and even sundaes.

While Stellar hopes to make its range of gelatos their identity, the limited brunch menu served till 3pm, offers a great morning fix for long drives. The breakfast burger for

instance is impeccably balanced, with a fried egg inside paired with Provolone cheese, lettuce, tomato, and potato wedges. The rainbow toast is a clear winner: fresh cucumber, cherry tomatoes,



red pepper and mushrooms are

wrote almost 800 short stories in Tamil.

Ramakrishna says that a majority of their audience has read Chudamani, and the interest is already palpable."Most of these stories were written by her between 1960 and 1980, in fact, she made such bold statements that you can't imagine being made today. Chudamani's women are very strong, in a quiet way."

Chudamani 2 will be staged on September 14 at 6.30pm at Narada Gana Sabha, Chennai. Donor passes from ₹600, ₹360, ₹240 and ₹120 can be purchased from mdnd.in.

Shades of grey A still from the

The stories touch upon the many facets of the human mind,

life, each about 18 to 19 minutes-long which have been strung together seamlessly," says Ramakrishna. "The wonderful thing about Chudamani is that in none of her stories is she ever judgemental. She tells her readers, this is what happened, take it and do what you like with it," he adds, of the writer, who

chunky brioche is a little dry and eggy, and misses a custard-like consistency in the middle, while the berry compote overshadows the sweetness. Gelatos and semifreddos aside,

dates-walnut-basil-balsamic olive

oil dressing. While the French

Toast is pleasing to the eye, the

Stellar has brioche-gelato sandwiches, pastries, cakes and sourdough-pizzas by the slice. The coffee, in the standard coffee menu of Americanos and flat whites is sourced from Chennai-based Beachville Roastery. Arjun says that there are plans to expand the brunch menu over time.

Though obscene amounts of gelato have been consumed, it is never enough. Moreover, the semifreddo waits for no one [they hold shape for half an hour, we are told]. Its mousse-like texture contrasts the spongy base layer, making for a solid shave with the spoon. The triple-layered chocolate semifreddo is familiar,

> and holds the sweetness one might crave for after a meal, while the pistachio one is a comforting dessert for those who prefer only a tiny hint of sweetness.

Stellar Gelato & Cafe is at 110, East Coast Road, Injambakkam. Cost for two (for gelatos) is ₹500 to ₹600, and (for breakfast) is ₹1,000 to ₹1,200.

rehearsals. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

through a gendered lens.

"These are all small vignettes of

Celebrate the festive season with the magic of the perfect Pedas The festive season is upon us, and we know there's one

thing on everyone's mind. And that is mithai. It's at the heart of every festivity. On a platter in every household. But the festive season doesn't call for the ordinary mithai. It calls for the one that is extra special. One that is etched in everyone's memory and hearts and lingers on everyone's taste buds long after it's over. The Peda. It's Rich. It's Smooth. It's Soft. It's Magnificent. A delectable creation that feels luxurious, looks fabulous, and tastes delicious. Because we all know that when it comes to mithai, it's the finer things and

quality that makes all the difference. So if you're looking to steal some sweet bites off the platter as it goes by or pick up something special for that Diwali house party you've been invited to, here are two Pedas that may just be what you need so you can make this season a little sweeter.

🐝 Amul Kesar Peda 🐝

A silky peda mixed with golden kesar makes this mithai anything but ordinary. Created to delight every sense, this Amul Kesar Peda is an exquisite fusion that's crafted from pure Amul Khoa and natural Kesar, making it the gold standard in mithai. Wrapped in a regal brown box that's embellished with shiny copper motifs, this Kesar Peda stays fresh and delicious, making it the perfect gift for the ones you love, no matter the occasion.

So, celebrate this festive season not just with any mithai, but the magic of Amul Peda.

It's the sweetest, most pure way to celebrate! Get your box today.

🥯 Amul Malai Peda 🕪

We spot something round, sweet, and

delish, and we're putting it straight into

our festive gift list. Because when your

family opens this box of Amul Malai Peda, they will be magically transported

to a world of heavenly goodness. Made

with pure Amul Milk, Khoa, Sugar, and

cardamom seeds powder, we can

guarantee that this divine mithai will

make it an extra sweet party. It's so

velvety, rich and smooth, that it sets the

right festive mood.

*CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

Tamil all the way

Five30 Media & Entertainment presents Oii Oii, a Tamil Alternative Music Festival. The event dedicated to celebrating the vibrant independent Tamil music scene and will feature artists such as Arivu, Santh, A-Gan, Urban Thozha, Iyyenar, and MC Devesh. This festival marks a significant milestone in the Tamil music landscape,

showcasing the power of independent artists and fostering collaboration. @One Paramount, Porur. September 14, 4pm to 10 pm. Tickets available on ticketprix.com.

Festive line

Rui Boutique, Mumbai, will present their latest festive collections at a three-day exhibition. Exclusive salwar sets and kurtis in silk, cotton and terryvoil, will be on sale. @The Folly, Amethyst, Royapettah. September 12 to 14 from 10am to 8pm. For more details, call 9820227109.

Onam fashion

On the occassion of Onam, Saanskrutie has a range of hand crafted ready-to-wear blouses on sale. The collection includes hand crafted cholis with Kutch work and mirror works. Also for sale are chanya cholis, skirts, dress materials, sarees, kurta, saris, readymade garments and iewellery.

@Saanskrutie, CP Ramaswamy Road, Alwarpet, from 11am to 9pm till September 15. For details, call 9798861033.



The world of Chudamani

Tamil writer R Chudamani's stories are being brought alive on-stage by The Madras Players

Gowri S

gowri.s@thehindu.co.in

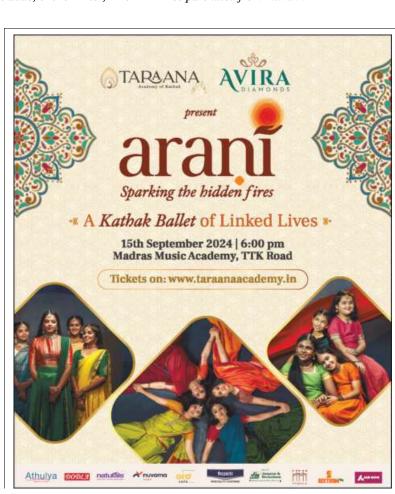
n the 1960s, Tamil writer R Chudamani captured the many shades of a woman's lived experiences like no other. Each short story or novel was a testament to an unabashed boldness captured beautifully through her probing prose, that has for long been adapted in many forms. Her first story, Kaveri, was written in 1957 while her first novel, Manathukku Iniyaval (Beloved Woman) was published in 1960. One such adaptation was in 2016 in Chennai, in the form of an anthology of plays by The Madras

Players that ran to a full house. Now, eight years later, a sequel to that anthology takes the stage

this weekend in the city. This time, a request from R Chudamani Memorial Trust, kick-started the project under PC Ramakrishna's directorial.

"Over the last year, I have been looking, reading and picking out stories. I picked seven stories this time that had a 'Chudamani' feel about it – by that I mean, they are stories of women who made a statement," says Ramakrishna.

Each of the seven stories, translated by CT Indra, Prabha Sridevan, PC Ramakrishna, the late KS Subramaniam and others, showcase the everyday woman and her conundrums: from an unmarried woman in her late 30s, a young girl who struggles with her own name, a woman who is in financial distress, and one searching for divinity within herself.





Enjoying the vibe

Hiphop Tamizha Adhi. THAMODHARAN B

That crazy shot

Meet Adam Bobrow, popular US table tennis commentator, on a mission to make his sport fun

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dumbfounded.

he snake is Adam Bobrow's weapon of mass destruction. Against his opponents, some of them amateurs and some professional, he uses it to devastating effect, leaving them

Adam is not a soldier and he is not fighting a war. He is a table tennis commentator who also plays the game for fun. Among his many innovative shots is the snake, a shot that is played from way below the table, which makes the ball spin in the direction opposite of where you thought it was heading. For Adam – a passionate promoter of the game – it has almost become his sobriquet.

In Chennai for the Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) championship recently, Adam is besieged by aspiring players who want him to teach them this unique 'snake shot'. "It feels like magic when the ball jumps. I make it as theatrical as possible with silly body moments," he smiles.

Adam is not the first to play it - professional TT players like Patrick Chila and Jan-Ove Waldner have used it in games and Swedish champ Truls Moregardh tried it during the recent Paris Olympics. But ever since Adam coined the word 'snake' to describe this particular shot during a commentary stint, it has become synonymous with him. "I spend a lot of time developing and practising this particular shot. A lot of people don't realise that table tennis involves a lot of spin too, which makes it exciting."

Adam's thriving YouTube channel, which has more than a million subscribers, has him playing with local TT players across the world. He even once embarked on a journey in a bid to find the 'What happened' guy, a player whose shocking reaction to a point became a popular meme across the world.

"I try to create an experience that people can relate to and in the process, have some fun," explains Adam. He has also played with some of the best professionals in the world, including French champ Alexis Lebrun, Indian champion Sharath Kamal and popular TT coach Antasiia Rybka, among others. "These professionals... they are incredibly generous and take it easy with me. They probably look at me like this kid who is excited to show up at their parents' workplace."

When Adam is not creating such content, he is on the sidelines of every important tournament across the world, adding value to the sport with his words. Adam's goal is, in his own words, to spread joy with the game he dearly loves. "I keep thinking of new ways to make table tennis more digestable. I want more people to watch and play the sport, so it needs to be visually easy to digest. When the ball jumps like it does with the snake – it helps to grab attention."





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here is a dystopian universe where the iconic Ripon Buildings of Chennai, the seat of the Greater Chennai Corporation, is obliterated. One sees overgrown vines snaking through a gutted, iconic colonial building - an evident casualty of an apocalyptic war. It is amidst the rubble and strife that Hip-hop Tamizha Adhi emerges. In Kadaisi Ulaga Por, a film set in a fictional southern province, he is the hero, director, producer, music director and (phew) lyricist. Was it as much a battle to don as many hats for the film?

At PGS Studio in Vanagaram, Adhi is tired yet enthusiastic after directing a couple of promotional videos for the film which is gearing for its release soon. Everything today, he says, is content and collaboration, more so, because it is his first production under the Hip hop Tamizha banner.

Just one of the boys

Hiphop Tamizha Adhi gets ready to perform in Chennai after a break at the Return of the Dragon concert on September 21

"It is entirely ours and it feels like a visionary project.. [it moves] a little outside of my regular movies like PT Sir and Veeran where I play a boy next door. This feels like the next step for me. It is apocalyptic but will definitely have my trademark entertainment," he says.

Adhi adds that much of the shoot, with experienced professionals like Nassar and Natarajan "Natty"

Subramanian, has proved that interesting professional relationships are key to lasting friendships in the industry. That, and maintaining a gang of his own who he has relied on for years, since college. "My office is full of my boys. Every day, work is fun because there are many interesting ideas and a vision. People said that a project like Kadaisi Ulaga *Por* is risky but the boys said paathukalam."

While Adhi has other projects up his sleeve, music, which is his claim to fame, is still an active part of his life. It is why he is all set to perform in Chennai on September 21 as part of his world tour, Return of the Dragon.

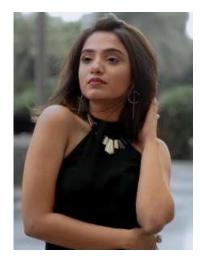
A concert in Chennai presents several moments of excitement for the singer. He says that he has a set with several favourites including 'Sakkarakatti' and 'Ethir Neechal'. "It's going to be a

vibe. During our performances at Wemblev (stadium in London) and in Malaysia, most people were standing up front and dancing along. If you want to have a really good experience, come with your gang and enjoy the vibe."

Adhi is among the first well-known independent musicians in the Tamil scene. Several early songs like 'Vaadi Pulla Vaadi', were created on a shoestring budget with a bunch of friends who the singer had known for years. He says that he is intent on ensuring that more interesting artistes in Tamil, shine. It is why he urges them to build a brand of their own. "Take away all the 'actor', 'director' tags and you're still left with an independent artiste in me. I want to be in touch with the community. This is why we started Underground Tribe."

Which stars from the scene today are on his playlist? "I listen to all the new stuff. I'm a rapper so I've also heard Paal Dabba, Asal Kolaar and MC Devesh. My playlist is full of independent artistes," he says.

Catch Hiphop Tamizha Adhi live in Chennai's YMCA Ground at 6.30pm (September 21) at Return of the Dragon: World Tour. Tickets are on insider.com. The concert is jointly presented by Torque entertainment and Raj melodies and is done in association with The Hindu.



On the fast track

Hasika Neethi's earliest memories associated with music are walking around the house listening to songs on a Walkman. She would listen to Michael Jackson and Bryan Adams thanks to her mother, while her father introduced her to Guns N' Roses and classic rock bands.

Today, Hasika – who shuttles between the US and Chennai – opens concerts and is busy working on singles. In fact, her upcoming release is 'Take Control', a track that fuses modern pop influences and traditional Indian music. "It opens with the nadaswaram," says Hasika, "I see 'Take Control' as a song that would inspire people to focus on their own needs and well-being rather than being controlled by external pressures."

She will soon premiere 'Take Control' in concerts, in which she regularly performs covers and other independent songs. In Los Angeles, her daily schedule

involves practising late into the night, which involves singing on a treadmill. "It really helps build vocal stability. I want to get to a place where I could do an entire show without any breaks," says Hasika, who is also an entrepreneur and has a background in law. She is also keenly looking at pursuing film music; composer AR Rahman is a big inspiration. "We share the same birthday, and it would be a dream to sing for him someday," she says.

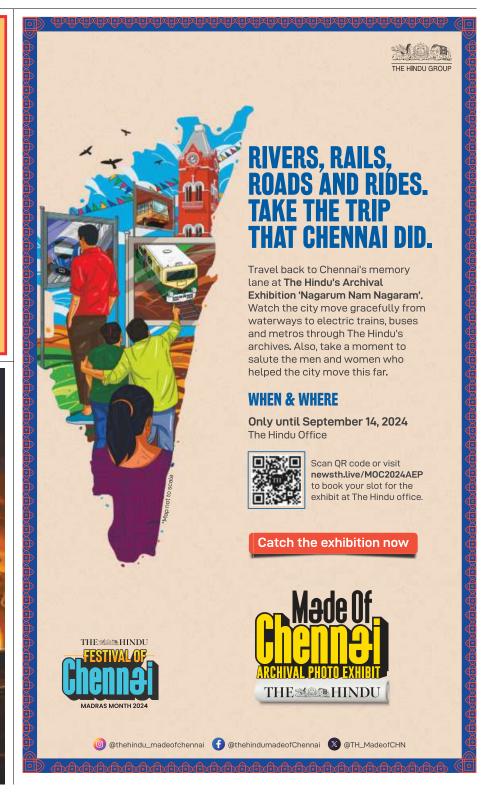
- Srinivasa Ramanujam



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Rao, known for Kannada film Sapta Saagaradaache Ello. In a statement, TJ Gnanavel said, "I've been following Jeevajothi's story since my days as a journalist. Dosa King is a hard-hitting story that exposes how the system functions, with a focus on the crime and thriller aspects of the narrative. I want to explore the extreme situations of life and tell a deeper story with an untold perspective on the case."