

fridayReview

THE HINDU

When Melattur comes alive
The annual Bhagavata Mela Utsavam is a celebration of a tradition **p2**

A slice of Shakti
Violinist L. Shankar is back in India for a musical reunion **p3**



A MUSICIAN'S WALK THROUGH DARK AND DEEP WOODS

Sanjeev Venkataraman's film *Lost in Harmony* captures the sounds and visuals of the forest **p4**

Parshathy J. Nath

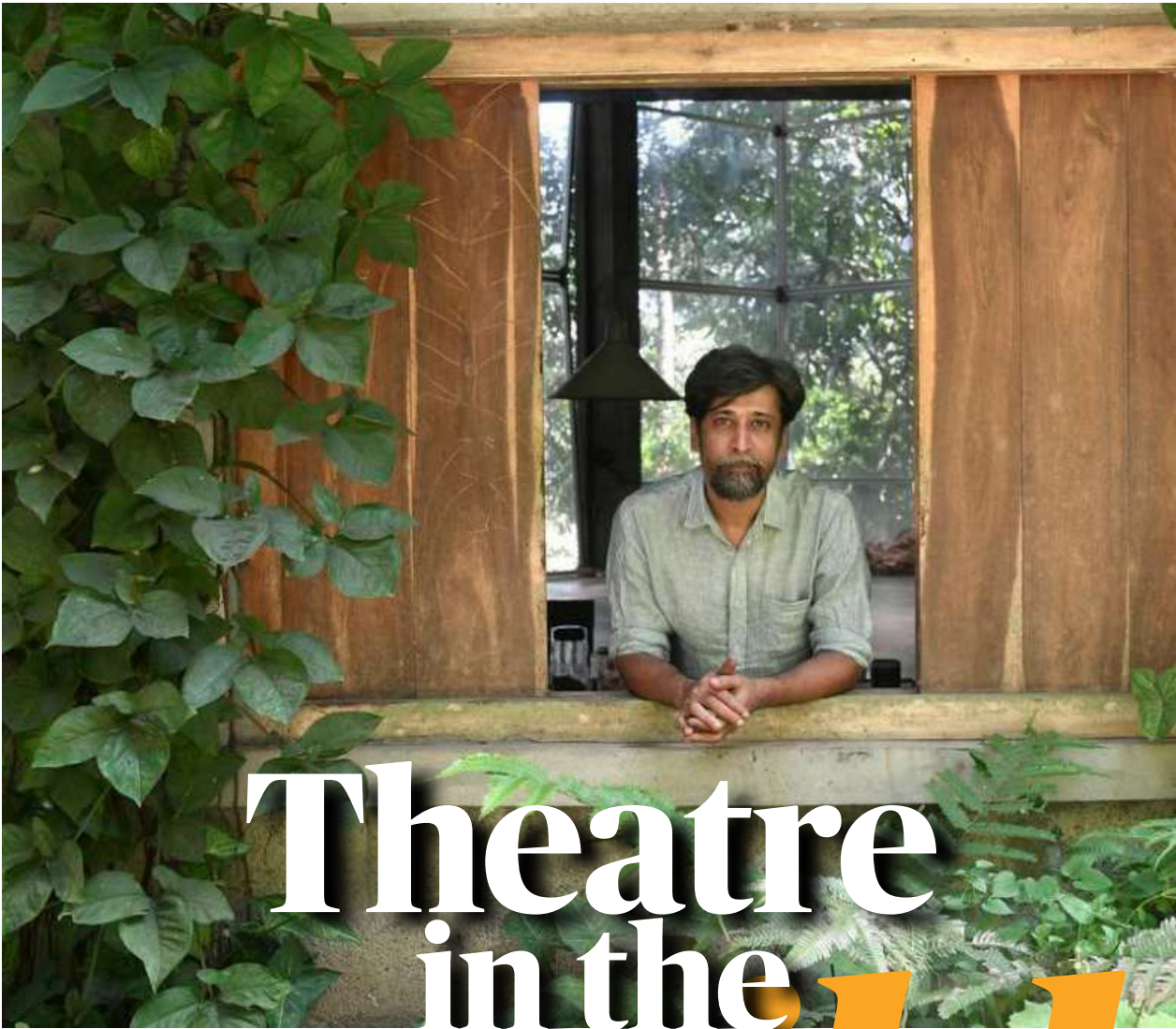
“Experience the strong emotion in silence. It can convey as much as movement or mime,” says theatremaker Sankar Venkateswaran. These words resonate in the quiet evening at Attappadi in Kerala. We are at his space – Sahyande Theatre – perched on a hilltop, with a river flowing below, to witness Sankar's latest work, *IM TOD-In My Time of Dying*.

The play, a collaboration with German theatremaker Leon Pfannenmüller, facilitated by Goethe-Institut through a co-production fund, has already run 20 shows in Europe and three shows in India.

From diary entries and postcards to a steel rod that was part of a leg, the play fiddles with fiction but is based on lived experiences. German dramaturg Maria Rossler helped them structure the text. Sankar believes finding words in theatre is the most difficult, especially after the explosion of the visual media. “I am trying to go to the deepest point of the text to understand what words mean today and how do you find words that can be convincing through real life, yet embracing the fictional world of theatre.”

Nature-friendly
Shaped like a Japanese fan, taking inspiration from Noh Theatre, a form in which Sankar is trained in and informs some of his work as well, Sahyande Theatre aspires to be the first carbon neutral theatre in the world. The design of the building ensures you don't need to switch on lights during the day, the green roof makes fans or AC irrelevant. “And, we have our own source of water, which will see us through eight months in a year, and then for the next four months we have to pump up water from a well, which is 100 metres below. In the coming years, we hope to transform the entire lighting requirements using a combination of solar and windmill,” says Sankar.

Kavita Srinivasan, an MIT-trained architect and theatremaker, wove together



Theatre in the wild

multiple ideas of life, work and Nature to create this space. It features a studio theatre, amphitheatre and five rooms to stay.

The idea to start this space came about when Sankar and his Japanese partner Satoko were working from Delhi, and later from Thrissur on Sankar's *Sahyande Makan - The Elephant Project*, a much-acclaimed production like his other works - *Ohta Shogo's Water Station* (2011), *101 Lullabies* (2012) and Henrik Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*. The space in Thrissur would get overbooked for government programmes. And they would be forced to cancel their rehearsals without receiving any compensation. This created problems for the artistes.

“I need immense concentration for the kind of work that I do. Many of my artistes come from across the world. We work in a residential kind of set up,” says Sankar, a recipient of the Shankar Nag award and Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar. Many of his works have found international stage, and he is also a recipient of International Ibsen Scholarship (2013).

Attappadi offered them a piece of

June 5 is World Environment Day.
Director Sankar Venkateswaran on how he aspires to make Sahyande Theatre on the Attappadi hills a carbon-neutral space

land where they could plant their dreams and see their ideas of theatre bloom. Once they set up the organisation, Theatre Roots and Wings, the interculturality of the place struck strongly. With the settler community speaking Tamil and Malayalam, and three of the indigenous communities speaking diverse languages, this space too turned multicultural. “All of this seemed suitable to further my cultural practice, which was at that time connected to Japan, Germany and Singapore,” recalls Sankar.

His training in myriad art forms at the Intercultural Theatre

Institute (ITI) in Singapore broadened his vision. “ITI taught me how to work with artistes with whom you have nothing in common. But if you have the will, you can still create work and make it meaningful.”

Art-life connect
Sankar has been working with the local singers in Attappadi to revive Madurai Veeran Koothu, a folk performance. But he says his work with them is not for the market. “They sing to make their day enjoyable, and the labour more pleasurable. The art-life connect

Sylvan setting (Clockwise from left) Sankar Venkateswaran; Sahyande Theatre, which is shaped like a Japanese fan; audience at the amphitheatre; and rehearsal session in progress. PHOTOS: THULASI KAKKAT AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



holds a different meaning to people here.”

The resilience shown by theatremakers such as Sankar during pandemic helped the fraternity sustain since artistes didn't know where to seek support from to keep theatre spaces alive. It also turned Satoko and Sankar into beekeepers. “We learnt beekeeping through YouTube tutorials. We produced honey. Hopefully in the coming years, this would become a resource, which could independently run Sahyande Theatre. Bee brings in honey, honey brings in money and money

runs the theatre. It also contributes to the ecology.”

One still vividly recalls Sankar's absence from digital theatre experimentation that caught a lot of attention during the lockdown. “Even at that time, I had strong reservations and questions about the online explosion. I put one of my pieces online, but as soon as the pandemic was over, we quit the digital medium. Performance in itself is a human tendency. It is human to gather and tell stories, talk and socialise.”

Sahyande Theatre stands testimony to this.

Afrah Pandikkadan and Parvathy K. Pillai

Quite like Mowgli of *The Jungle Book*, who discovers the charm of the wild through his animal friends, *Jungle Jugalbandi* will help children discover the beauty of classical music through the story of a forest and its inhabitants.

Brought out jointly by Ashmi Shah's Peek-a-Boo and Kamakshi and Vishala Khurana's The Sound Space, *Jungle Jugalbandi* narrates a koyal's adventurous journey through the jungle in search of partners to join her music band.

“We came up with this project because we felt not much is being done to reach out to children as far as art and culture are concerned. We wanted to introduce Indian instruments through a story and thought this was one of the best ways to do it,” say Kamakshi and Vishala.

The book is colourfully illustrated by Aayushi Shah to



Rhythm safari

Jungle Jugalbandi, a colourfully illustrated book, introduces children to Hindustani music in a fun way

Catching them young The book attempts to take children into the world of music.

introduce children to raags, taals and sounds of various instruments of Hindustani music. Young readers can also scan a QR code to listen to the jugalbandi of koyal and her friends.

But how did Kamakshi and Vishala arrive at this format? “There was a lot of brainstorming and discussions. A rhyme sequence that talks about

instruments and animals is something that would appeal to children. So we arrived upon this format.

In the digital age, when most children are addicted to gadgets, *Jungle Jugalbandi* attempts to take them closer to the world of words, colours, sounds and Nature.

‘kuhu kuhu’ sings the koyal making music as she flies, ‘tirakita dhin’ plays the elephant tapping away on the tabla and the bear plays the long and round sitar. The three set out on a quest to find more members for their band. Later, a monkey and a tiger join the team. Finally, the five come together for a baithak.

The book also serves as a resource for parents and teachers to create an engaging atmosphere that ignites a child's curiosity.

From the gentle pluck of a harp to the resonant melody of a trumpet, such books introduce children to the kaleidoscope of sounds produced by different Indian instruments. It will not only cultivate music appreciation in the young but can also spark an interest to pursue the art.



Artistes and people come together at Melattur to keep alive the Bhagavata Mela tradition

N.C. Srinivasaraghavan

Every year, during the month of May, a village not too far from the Chola heartland of Thanjavur lights up with much pomp and grandeur. Narasimha Jayanthi holds great significance here. It is marked by a fortnight-long Nritya Nataka Utsavam.

In the truest sense, Melattur is an art village because it has produced some outstanding artistes and composers. Even today, the plays composed by eminent playwright Melattur Venkatarama Sastri are enacted to honour the artistic legacy of this village. The heartwarming hospitality offered by villagers to their guests needs no elaboration. Members of every household guide visitors to the Varadaraja temple, where a stage is put up on the street, facing the deity.

Sustaining a tradition like Bhagavata Mela is a monumental task and the festival thrives due to the efforts of several artistes and art-lovers. The family of the renowned dance guru and Bhagavata Mela exponent Melattur S. Natarajan continues to organise the Utsavam even after his passing. Natarajan's brother Kumar took over the baton and has taken several steps to ensure a large audience attends and, most importantly, appreciates the worth of the tradition.

For global audience

The entire fest is livestreamed for the benefit of global audiences. In addition, Kumar has released several videos on the group's official YouTube channel, demystifying the nuances of the tradition by featuring every member involved to highlight their individual contributions as well. Performance slots are also offered to budding dancers and reputed dance schools.

Bhagavata Mela dramas are invariably a musical treat and needs to be examined separately to understand the appeal of these natakams. The



It takes a village to save an artform

12 Telugu dramas written by Venkatarama Sastri are full of traditional daruvus of different contexts – pravesha daruvus, uttara pratyuttara daruvus, samvaada daruvus, svatata daruvus, pralaaba daruvus, etc. Every daruvu stands out for the literary and musical devices that have been incorporated by Venkatarama Sastri. Employing the choicest poetic expressions both in the dialogues as well as the lyrics of songs, Venkatarama Sastri has ensured that lovers of the Telugu language rejoice every phrase.

Each character has a unique personality and every Paatra Pravesha daruvu (self-introductory entrance) attempts to highlight the qualities of the character, requiring musicians and dancers to be aware of both the musical as well as contextual aspects. The

daruvus are set in difficult ragas such as Ahiri, Ghanta and Maanji apart from ghana ragas such as Shankarabharanam and Arabhi. It is to be noted that Venkatarama Sastri's musical expertise is evident from how he entirely disproves the belief of using a particular raga only for a certain rasa or a personality type. For instance, one can hear a Paatra Pravesha in Atana, a raga representing Veera rasa, for a graceful female character. A strong and fearsome male character surprisingly uses Kalyani, a raga that is typically thought of to represent grace and beauty.

Specialised approach

Carrying forward the guru parampara, which traces itself back to Saint Tyagaraja. Tiruvaiyaru Brothers (S. Narasimhan and S. Venkatesan) lead the orchestra

that is an integral part of these dramas, along with L. Prabakaran. Songs of a nritya-natakam demand a specialised approach. Musicians have to adhere to the composer's artistic vision in terms of ragas and overall bhava, in addition to working closely with the dancers on stage. The children of singers N. Venkatasubramanian and V. Venkatakrishnan are helping to preserve the family heritage. Instrumentalists, who for long have been part of the orchestra include, Lalgudi K. Ramaprasad on the violin and B. Gokulakrishnan on the flute. Apart from accompanying the vocalists, they provide calculative musical interludes and aesthetic raga insertions.

Mridangam is of paramount importance in these natakams. Nagai P. Sriram single-handedly provides percussion support, offering



Legacy From Melattur Bhagavata Mela Natya Nataka Sangam's play *Harischandra part 1 and 2*. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND N.C. SRINIVASARAGHAVAN

much-needed rhythmic diversity for every line that is musically repeated several times with different lyrics in a typical Bhagavata Mela daruvu.

The play *Harischandra* narrates the lifestory of Raja Harischandra. It focusses on his travails as he struggles to fulfil his promises to sage Vishwamitra, who demands his entire wealth and even his kingdom. Playing the titular character, senior Bhagavata Mela performer Kumar retains a distinct style of presentation associated with lead male characters. Quite like the Yakshagana tradition, Kumar's unique portrayal of Harischandra with extensive usage of footwork aligned to the music along with syncing of the lips to the song being sung with appropriate expression is to be appreciated as a rare skill. Kumar mastered the basics of this style under the guidance of his father G. Swaminathan. Kumar's performing skills shines when his character is forced by circumstances to work in a cremation ground. His energy and enthusiasm on stage elevate the plays.

Senior dancer Srikanth Natarajan, who is a part of Bhagavata Mela for the last 45 years, plays Chandramathi, a role that was portrayed by Melattur Natarajan. Srikanth, who is known for his mature saatvikaabhinaya has aced this role. A daruvu reserved for Chandramathi in raga Ghanta is one of the play's highlights. It talks about Chandramathi recollecting the privileged life that she led before being forced to work for an elderly man. Srikanth's lokadharmi, where he shows Chandramathi performing daily chores, is convincing. Nagai Sriram's mridangam enhances the musical quality of this daruvu. Srikanth takes utmost care to regulate his facial expressions even when he stands on the stage as other characters speak. The character of Chandramathi is an integral part of the play and no one could have done it better.

Mathanga Kanya is a seductress sent by Vishwamitra to entice Harischandra. The character is feisty, flirtatious, and provocative. Over the years, senior dancer Vijay

Madhavan has developed a rasika base for his portrayal of this character. Vijay explores the multi-hued traits of Mathanga Kanya in a layered manner every year. This time, he chose to utilise the staircase leading up to the stage to position himself as he plays the veena in the Nadanamakriya daruvu. The tense situation that prevails between Mathanga Kanya and Chandramathi as they throw shade on each other is a scene to behold. Vijay must be appreciated for his expert handling of the overt sringara in these pieces.

Wider appeal

Bhagavata Mela brings together people of various age groups. This augurs well for the artform. Children such as Rakshit A and Sudarsan S sincerely portray Lohitaksha. Octogenarian R. Varadarajan astonish viewers with his authentic portrayal of the king of Kashi. Special mention must be made of Venkatasubramaniam, who plays Nakshatriyan, a comical character. Young dancer Sundaresan Pandurangan is an apt choice for the character Madanavathi. It is encouraging to note that the children of the present actors and dancers take up roles in these dramas. It is important to pass on the art to younger dancers gradually to ensure continuity and this is something that Kumar has been working on consciously.

To make the natakams more audience-friendly, copies of books that contain the lyrics and Tamil/English translations of the Telugu daruvus and dialogues, should be made available.



H. Ramakrishnan

As part of the the 'Kshetra Sankirithana Vaibhavam', a series of concerts organised by Naada Inbam, young Shakthi Muralidharan steered a musical pilgrimage to Tiruvarur, Mayiladuthurai and Mannargudi.

Of the ten songs that she rendered, eight were dedicated to Tiruvarur. Saivite saint Thirugnana Sambandar, who lived sometime in the seventh century had an easy prescription to attain Mukthi (liberation). In his hymn on the Lord of Tiruvarur 'Chittham theliveerkaal aththan aaroorai', he asserts that for those who long to have a clear mind and liberation, the best way is to offer flowers to the Lord of Aroor (Tiruvarur). Of the many temples in the Southern bank of Cauvery, this is the 87th praised in the Thevaram. Tiruvarur is rightly known as the holy centre for murthy (deity), shalam (shrine) and teertham (water body).

Another notable aspect of the holy town is that the Carnatic music Trinity – Saint Tyagaraja (1767), Muthuswami Dikshitar (1776) and Syama Sastri (1762) – were all born in Tiruvarur. Dikshitar stayed on in Tiruvarur and composed several kritis on the deities of this temple. Tyagaraja was so



Musical stopovers

A concert with songs on Tiruvarur, Mayiladuthurai and Mannargudi was a delight for both pilgrims and music-lovers

named by his parents because Tyagesa, the presiding deity of Tiruvarur, appeared in their dream and blessed them with a son who will embody the spiritual essence of saint Narada.

The Tyagaraja Swamy

temple in Tiruvarur also helps understand and admire the South Indian architectural marvel. The temple has nine rajagopurams, 80 vimanams, 12 tall walls, 13 mandapams, 365 Shivalingams, 15 teertams, over a hundred

shrines, and 86 Vinayaka idols.

Shakthi commenced her concert with a rare Telugu kriti by Dikshitar, 'Nee saati deivamendu', (Rupakam) in raga Sriranjani. This daru is set in the Nayaki bhava. And, the muktayi swara and swara sahitya add to the appeal of the kriti.

Shakthi is the student of Sathur Lalitha Santhanam and Amritha Murali. Blessed with a sweet voice, her music brims with energy and bhava.

Through 'Tyagaraja palayashumam', another Dikshitar composition on the deity of Tiruvarur, the artiste brought out the devotional hue of raga Gowla. It was then the turn of a Kamalamba Navavarana kriti. In the raga alapana, Shakthi could

effortlessly interweave the patterns of Anandabhairavi and bring out its essence. 'Kamalamba samrakshatu', the first of the Navavarana kritis, is considered a magnum opus of Dikshitar. It is in the Triloakya Mohana Chakra, the enchanter of all the three worlds.

Steeped in devotion

Shakthi then went on to render Sundarar's Thevaram hymn 'Patthimayum adimayum', of the seventh Thirumurai on Tiruvarur in Sankarabharanam, and the first of the Tiruvarur Panchalinga kritis, 'Sadachaleswaram' in Bhupalam. The Tamil padam by Papavinasa Mudaliyar, 'Mukhatthai kaattiye' (Misra Chapu) on Tiruvarur in

Confident Shakthi Muralidharan with C. Charulatha (veena) and Kaushik Sridhar (mridangam). PHOTO: M. SRINATH

Bhairavi was steeped in devotion.

She rendered two more kritis on Tiruvarur – 'Muchukunda tyagaraja varada', a Nottuswara sahityam, which refers to the episode of Muchukunda, a Chola king, who is supposed to have brought Lord Tyagaraja from heaven to Tiruvarur. The Navavarana Mangala kriti, 'Sri kamalambike', in Sri raga was preceded by a shloka penned by violin virtuoso R.K. Shriramkumar.

Shakthi's next was on Mayiladuthurai. Lord Mayuranathaswamy, an incarnation of Shiva, is the presiding deity of the Mayavaram temple. Goddess Abhayambika is His consort. The temple has a nine-tiered gopuram of 165 ft in height. Saints Gnanasambandar, Thirunavukkarsar and Arunagiri have sung hymns on this temple. Dikshitar has composed Abhayamba Vibhakti kritis on the goddess.

The highlight of the concert was the Kedaragowla kriti, 'Abhayaambikaayaa', one of the Vibhakti kritis by Dikshitar. It is in Panchami Vibhakti. Shakti's raga

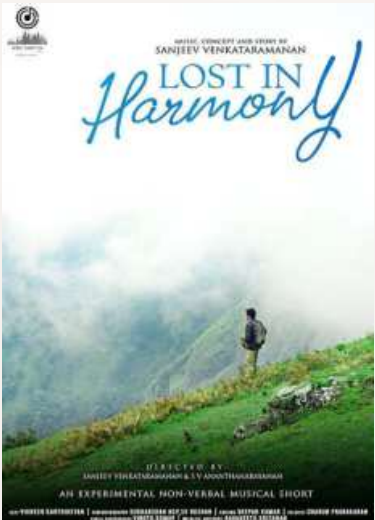
elucidation was well-crafted and carried the emotional depth that perfectly suited the structure of the kriti. . Swaraprastara was at the pallavi.

Leisurely niraval

The next stopover was at Mannargudi (Tiruvarur district), which houses the Rajagopalaswamy temple. It is one of the oldest Vaishnava temples in India, built by the Chola king Kulottunga I. Like in the case of Mayiladuthurai, Shakthi rendered only one song on the Mannargudi temple. But, the Dikshitar song 'Sri rajagopala' (Saveri) proved to be the highlight of the concert. Shakthi's raga alapana showcased her creativity. She handled the kriti in an appropriate kalapramana. A leisurely niraval and swaras at 'Dhiragraganya' had deft touches .

This concert was unique in a way that instead of the usual violin accompaniment, Shakthi had a vainika accompany her. The veena accompaniment was by C. Charulatha, student and granddaughter of veteran vainika R.S. Jayalakshmi.

On the mridangam was young Kaushik Sridhar, a disciple of Trichur Mohan. His thani after the Saveri piece, especially the rhythmic flourishes in Tisra nadai, displayed his grasp of the nuances.



Violinist Sanjeev Venkataramanan.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Charumathi Supraja

Lost in Harmony is about losing oneself in Nature and all the feelings that it brings. Described as an “experimental, non-verbal, musical short,” the film is soaked in greens, browns and all shades between that only the earth can cook up. Many of those earthly tints have been captured in the film not only through the eyes of its protagonist (whose trek has unexpectedly turned into a solo adventure) but also through music that underscores the magic and mystery of the forest.

Produced by Sonic Sanctum Studios, the film’s concept, story and musical score are by Sanjeev Venkataramanan, a violinist, who identifies himself more as a composer and producer than as a Carnatic music performer. The film shot in forests across south India maps many contrasts – sound and silence, light and darkness, safety and risk, drenched leaves and dry rocks – to name a few.

Earthy notes

Sanjeev Venkataramanan walked along rivers and forests to shoot his film *Lost in Harmony*, which will be launched on World Environment Day

The film depicts the myriad emotions that Nature can evoke. Fear, wonder, curiosity, peace, love and ecstasy are just some of them. A six-member team including two cinematographers, a wildlife advisor, producer, actor and director travelled about 3,000 kms over 15 days to get most of the footage.

After covering forests around Thekkady, Bhadra, Dandeli, Bandipur, Hogenakkal and other places, the team realised they needed more shots for which they travelled to the interiors of Puducherry, Senji and Pulicat. The shoot demanded trekking, camping and surrendering to the rhythm of the forest. It sometimes involved walking deep into the woods carrying equipment and supplies, or camping on sites surrounded by

deep pits to keep away elephants. They spent some nights listening to stories from forest rangers or simply immersed in the symphony of sounds of the forest.

“*Lost in Harmony* is informed by all these experiences,” says Sanjeev, adding that he had to tweak the story during the shoot based on what the forests offered. Sanjeev’s musical journey always ran parallel to his relationship with Nature and love for wildlife photography. The inspiration for this film came from a single movement of music that he wrote. “Music can be used to convey a lot of emotions. Even without visuals, music lends itself to a story. The first image that came to me was of a young man seeking peace,” he says. Keeping that in mind, he wrote the music, which then became the foundation for the film, not the other way round where music is composed for visuals.

Exploring musical vocabulary
A senior Carnatic violinist and a long-time student of violin virtuoso A. Kanyakumari, Sanjeev found that one had always to “respond or answer someone” (mostly the main artiste) as an accompanying artiste in a classical concert. Being more interested in instrumental music and curious about the emphasis on harmony in Western music, Sanjeev sought to explore his own

musical vocabulary. “Western music has not explored gamakas and we have not explored harmony,” he says. Wanting to bring a confluence of both, he set about learning to write music using staff notation, for which he says, having a basic understanding of swaras helps. He veered towards orchestral music in his compositions, inspired by his musical icon Ilaiyaraaja, whose ability to make music in the most measured way, he admires. “There’s never an excess of music in Ilaiyaraaja sir’s compositions. Every note sits just right with the visuals,” says Sanjeev. Having been a musician for whom “lyrics took a backseat,” Sanjeev worked towards creating music that is not fusion (because that would mean that there are two separate parts) but music that is one whole.

Main inspiration
His main inspiration, Sanjeev says, is his guru A. Kanyakumari, whose classes he has fond memories of. “Being a busy artiste, she could conduct classes only after 10 p.m. We learnt in a small group and the healthy competition strengthened our musical skills.” Possibly from her musical practice, he developed a deep love for instrumental music, which, he says, allows for a raga to be presented far more grandly. It is no wonder that Sanjeev’s orchestral music melds seamlessly with the stunning forest visuals in *Lost in Harmony*, which has won 14 awards in the festival circuits so far, of which four are international. The film’s big screen premiere is scheduled for World Environment Day (June 5) at Tagore Film Centre, Chennai. Composer Vidyasagar will preside over the event.



Driving home a message PMG Mayurapirya’s Big Boss. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

And the award goes to... Tamil play *Big Boss*’ triumphant outing at the Kodai Nataka Vizha

Suganthy Krishnamachari

Is there only one route to success – a degree in Engineering at a premier institute? And even assuming the answer is yes, what is the price one pays for this? These are among the many questions PMG Mayurapriya’s latest play *Big Boss* (story, dialogues, direction P. Muthukumar) raises about the education scenario. The play was staged recently for Sri Thyaga Brahma Gana Sabha.

Centum Sethuraman (Ganapathy Shankar) runs an academy, where only bright students are admitted. He puts them through rigorous schedules and gloats when his students score centum in the board exams. His wife Sowmya (Anu Suresh) tries to din some sense into him, pointing out that the world operates based on the law of

averages. Superlative students are few in number, as are the ones who score very poorly. Most fall in between and can be helped to improve their scores. But Sethuraman refuses to get rid of his centum fixation. His teacher Shivasubramaniam (V.P.S. Shriraman) reminds Sethuraman that he himself had never been a great student, and that many mediocre students had found their niche. Moreover, helping a smart student score a centum was no big deal. Such students needed only a nudge. What was important was giving the average student a push, argues Shivasubramaniam. Initially, Sethuraman ignores Shivasubramaniam’s advice. But the death of Shivasubramaniam brings about a change of heart in him, and he decides to teach the son of a labourer and an unruly boy who has played truant often.

Four students are told to stay in Sethuraman’s house, and are cut

off from the outside world. The exam results are a credit to Sethuraman. Sethuraman is given the Big Boss title, because he had kept the students sequestered, like the participants in the popular TV show *Big Boss*. This portion seemed contrived, as if it had been introduced to justify the title.

While the dialogues were well-written, some pruning is needed to make the script taut. The set was just right without being fussy. S. Aditya, G. Shiva Shankar, Dhiraj C. Mohan and S. Ananth as the students, were full of beans.

This play won the Best Play award and four more awards at the Kodai Nataka Vizha of Kartik Fine Arts this year. The rolling trophy newly instituted by Ramkumar Ganesan, son of Sivaji Ganesan, is going to be awarded to the Mayurapriya team for all round performance.

Role of honour

Kartik Fine Arts will host the award function of their 33rd Kodai Nataka Vizha, on June 1, 5.30 p.m. at Narada Gana Sabha main hall. Senior dramatist C.V. Chandramohan will receive the Kartik Ramanujam Award of Excellence for best theatre artiste, and PMG Mayurapriya theatre group will receive the maiden ‘Nadigar Thilagam Sivaji Ganesan’ award for all-round excellence.

Awards will be presented under various categories including Best actor, play, story writer, dialogue writer, director, child artiste, and best comedian. Besides the artistes, the awards will also be given to the best lighting company, make-up man, supporting artiste, background music and best scenes. Among the 18 award categories, PMG Mayurapriya’s play *Big Boss* gets the award for best play, best storywriter, best dialogue writer (P. Muthukumar) and best character actor (VPS Sriraman); and thRee’s *Thotra Mayakkangalo* is chosen for awards under seven categories.

Girish Venkat will receive the best actor award for *Ambi Mama*; best direction award will go to debutant director Sridhar Ramaswamy (*Thotra Mayakkangalo*). JC Creations’s *Meendum Thanikkudithanam* has been adjudged the best comedy play, while Ambi Raghavan has been chosen for the best comedian award (*Ambi Mama*).

The award function will be followed by the staging of Theatre Marina’s six short plays at 7 p.m.: *Puratchi Onguga*; *Ulagu Vazhakkam*; *Kai Kalappu*; *Akkara Adisil*; *Mudhumai* and *Kizhaku Aamabalpattu*.

CALENDAR

Special concert

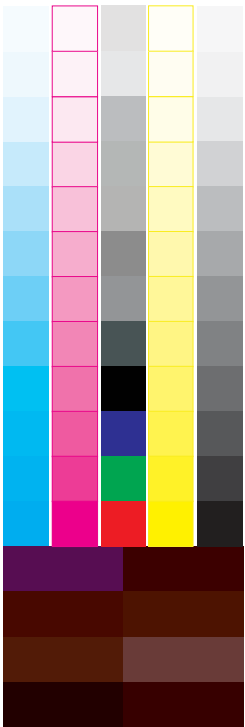


The Music Academy has organised Kolkata Padmavathi Saranathan’s vocal concert as part of Mysore Vasudevachar Day celebrations, today, 6 p.m. at Kasturi Srinivasa Hall. Pavani Mallajosyula (violin) and Palayamkottai B. Guru Raghavendra (mridangam) are the accompanists. The programme is organised under the endowment, instituted by Gomathi Visvanathan through Kala Mandir Trust.

Carnatic vocal



Madhuradhwani has organised a concert series between May 31 and June 6 at Arkay Convention Centre, Mylapore. Details: Today, 6.15 p.m.: Palakkad Sreeram (flute) in memory of Flute Mali. June 2, 6.15 p.m.: Sriram Parasuram (vocal) as part of Thanjavur S. Kalyanaraman’s 94th jayanthi. June 3, 6.30 p.m.: Ritwik Raja (vocal) as part of Chingleput Ranganathan’s Jayanthi. June 6, 6.15 p.m.: Radhika Kannan (vocal).



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CERC Campus Exhibition Ground
Kalakshetra Road, Opp, Pamban Swamy Koil
Thiruvanniyur, Chennai - 600 041.

Pet Adoption Drive on

24th, 25th, 26th May & 1st, 2nd June

From 3.00 - 7.00pm

By:

ENTRY & PARKING FREE | OPEN ON SUNDAY'S ALSO
Mob. : +91 98456 95922 / 78291 70001

By: manya_hastakala / smart_art_events

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