

# fridayReview

THE HINDU



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**Smooth flow of movements**  
Nirupama and Rajendra linked the journey of our lives and the river **p2**

**A youngster to watch out for**  
Pritam Das left a lasting impression with his striking stage presence **p2**



**25 YEARS OF  
SWAMI HARIDAS  
TANSEN SANGEET  
NRITYA SAMAROH**

Curator and dancer  
Uma Sharma on the  
making of the festival **p3**

**Stringing stories together**  
(Clockwise from right) Puppets from  
France, Taiwan and Turkey.  
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



**Charumathi Supraja**

There was a time when the word ‘puppets’ conjured up images of toy-like mythological characters handled by puppeteers, from behind a screen or above a box. This is not true of contemporary puppets. These (sometimes, larger than life) puppets love to be on stage. They might be seen dancing to groovy music in elaborate costumes or found holding forth in a most engaging manner on contemporary issues. They cannot be typecast. In fact, they demand that you use your imagination and walk halfway to make a story come alive.

Among the puppeteers and puppet theatre organisations that have contributed to this shift, the names of Dadi Pudumjee and Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust stand out. Seeing puppets as a “means rather than an end”, Ishara has put India firmly on the map of puppet theatre companies from across the world through the Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival.

To be held from today till February 25 this year, the 20th edition of the fest will bring in puppet theatre companies from across the globe. The shows will address diverse themes such as world peace, humanity, acceptance of oneself, beauty, true love, the need for imagination in science as much as the arts, and peer pressure.

Speaking about the festival’s

Puppeteers from across the globe will converge at the 20th edition of Dadi Pudumjee’s Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival, which opens today in Delhi



## The toy story

journey, Dadi Pudumjee recalls how they intentionally “started it as a small national festival with low ticket prices”, because they were doubtful that anyone would “buy a ticket to watch puppet shows”. Two decades later, though they have “wobbly knees” before every edition, he says: “puppet theatre companies are contacting us for slots in the 2025 edition and we have packed shows, with audiences even waiting outside”.

For this, he primarily credits one entity - “the audiences, without whom no show is complete or purposeful”. He calls the audience “the real sponsors”, while mentioning that the festival has run for 20 years “without any sponsors” of the usual kind. Sponsors still seem to believe that

puppet shows are only for children, he says. “Most theatre companies that make it here, come on their own steam. They try to contact embassies of guest countries for support if a group cannot pay for their travel. Ishara’s motivation to still run the festival is only “audience goodwill,” reiterates Dadi. He describes an audience in Kerala that recently watched Ishara’s Hindustani play on Rumi with Malayalam subtitles. “There was total silence, so we wondered how much of a barrier the language was, but there was huge applause as soon as the show ended,” he says, describing what a joy it is to see audiences step up if the story is told well.

Audiences, especially children, get nuance and complexity, observes Dadi, and urges adult gatekeepers such as school principals and parents to read the synopsis of shows. If not, they end up choosing only the “pretty and highly sanitised shows, because there are so many good shows with social messages for children that must get their audience”.

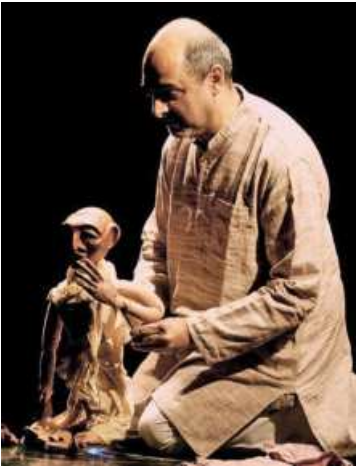
Dadi describes an incident from a school show when the Principal felt that the show was “violent” because an oppressed person of colour thrashed his oppressor “very creatively - and in a very fun way” at the end of the play. When she asked the students if they didn’t find the show violent, a “student in the audience pointed out that it was allegorical and they were using metaphors,” says Dadi. He adds, “what use it would be to portray the world as pretty and sweet without considering what is happening outside the door.”



### Puppets on a mission

Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival will be held from today till February 25 at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi and Tagore Theatre in Chandigarh. It is produced by Teamwork Arts.

- At the festival, France will present *Wings And Roots*, which imparts lessons in humanity.
- The musical menagerie *Air Giants* is a Brazilian circus spectacle featuring larger-than-life animals and whimsical characters.
- *Penguin In My Pocket* from the U.S. highlights the importance of imagination in science and art. It features marionettes, rod puppets, audience member puppeteers, and live concertina music.
- *Petrushka*, Russia’s most famous puppet character will be brought back to life with a celebration of 400 years of tradition.
- *Hiss & Arf* is a non-verbal performance showcasing traditional Taiwanese glove puppetry techniques.
- From Sri Lanka comes the *Traditional String Puppet Show* while Culture Art Bakery FFWANG from Korea will present Hong Dongji & Isimi.
- The Ishara Puppet Theatre Group will present *Be Yourself*, an adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen’s *The Ugly Duckling*.



**Ishara started as a small national festival but today puppet theatre companies are contacting us for slots in the 2025 edition and we have packed shows**

**DADI PUDUMJEE**

And yet, puppetry is not just for children. And nor is it “small,” says Dadi. Puppetry has theatre, music, dance and more. Having produced and directed shows on Kabir’s dohas, Rumi’s life, Gandhi’s values and on HIV/AIDS – all with music, movement and whatever else it needed to be a story well told, he holds that “educational and creative puppetry” are increasingly well-received.

In keeping with that thought, Ishara’s latest production that will open at this year’s festival is based on the famous story of *The Ugly Duckling*. Titled ‘Be Yourself’, it speaks of self-acceptance even while shunning the need to become conventionally beautiful. Another unique feature of this production will be the use of Indian heritage textiles (such as Ikat and Kalamkari) for different characters. “The idea is to introduce Indian textiles to children even while speaking about peer pressure and subverting the white swan ending in the original story,” says Dadi.

## CULTURE BRIEFS

### Dance and design

Aalaap presents ‘In-Sights into Shilpanatanam’, an evening of sharing by Maya Kulkarni, followed by the performance ‘Yakshini’ by Bharathi Penneshwaran, a student of Maya, on February 20 (6.30 p.m.) at Medai - The Stage.

Maya Kulkarni is a New York-based dancer, choreographer, teacher and commentator. She pioneered Shilpanatanam, a style of movement and choreography that blends architecture, paintings and movement vocabulary. ‘Yakshini’ is inspired by the unique architecture of the 64 Yogini temples in Odisha.

For tickets, email [ops.aalaap@gmail.com](mailto:ops.aalaap@gmail.com) or buy at the venue on the day of the show



### Twin celebrations

Sri Thyaga Brahma Gana Sabha hosts Tyagaraja aradhana at Vani Mahal, T. Nagar. A concert series as part of P. Obul Reddy - P. Gnanamba Trust endowment begins today. It will feature Radha Bhaskar, Nithyasree Mahadevan and Bharat Sundar. N. Gopalaswami, former Chief Election Commissioner of India, will inaugurate and present the ‘Thyaga Brahma Nadha Vibhushan’ award (instituted by Vijaykumar Reddy and Dr. Preetha Reddy) to veteran violinist M. Chandrasekaran. Veteran vocalist Suguna Varadachari felicitates.

On February 18 (10 a.m.) Pancharatna kritis will be rendered by musicians. From February 19 to 21 (6.30 p.m.) Erode Balaji Bhagavatur will present the harikatha ‘Sathguru Tyagaraja’s Ramaanubhavam’.

The sabha, in association with Sri Kanchi Mahaswami Vidya Mandir, presents the 16th Namasankirtana Vaibhavam from February 22 to March 3 at its venue. S. Vaidhyasubramaniam, Vice-Chancellor, SASTRA Deemed University, will inaugurate and present the title ‘Sri Kanchi Mahaswami Nama Sudha Vani’ to Madipakkam Ramamoorthy Bhagavatur.

The festival will feature a special namasankirtanam by the students of SASTRA University, and singing of thodayamangalam, guru keerthanai, ashtapadi, tarangams and namasankirtanam by bhagavatars. It concludes with Tiruvannamalai Pichumani’s Unchavritti and Udayalur Kalyanaraman’s ‘Sri Radha Kalyanam’.



K. Bharat Sundar and (right) Udayalur Kalyanaraman

### Art for all

DCF, in association with the British Council and Paragon Music & Dance Co, Scotland, will conduct Aavaa Dingi, an international music and dance festival on February 25, 5.30 p.m., at the Open Air Theatre, IIT, Madras. The inclusive festival aims to empower underprivileged and economically challenged youths and differently-abled people.

Divided into four components – Inclusive Music, Inclusive Dance, Inclusive Award Ceremony and Story of Inclusivity through Visual Arts - it will feature international and local bands and music groups.

### The healing effect

The webinar ‘Your Brain and Music’ will be streamed on February 20, 7 p.m. (13.30 hrs UTC/GMT). Prof. Michael Trimble, Professor Emiretus of Behavioural Neurology, University College, London, and author of *The Soul in the Brain, Why Humans Like to Cry and Sudden Death in Opera* will be in conversation with Prof. Nigel Osborne MBE, composer, and Ennapadam S. Krishnamoorthy, behavioural neurologist, neuropsychiatrist and founder of Buddhi Clinic. The webinar is in honour of Dr. Krishnamoorthy Srinivas’ 91st birthday.

### Kathakali festival

Bharata Kalanjali presents a two-day Kathakali festival (March 2 and 3) at TEACH Auditorium, Taramani. The events on the first day will begin with Sadanam Kathakali Academy’s ‘Ekalavyan’. The inaugural evening will also include the presentation of ‘Kalaa Bhaskara’ award to Sadanam

Harikumar, who will present a lec dem ‘Aangikaabhinayam: Kathakali Kalari’ on the second day at 10 a.m.





V.V. Ramani

It was a refreshing change to move away from the pining nayikas tormented by Manmatha to watch a Kathak performance by Nirupama and Rajendra at the annual dance festival of the Music Academy.

The presentation comprised two main compositions to which the duo danced, interspersed with group choreographic work featuring students of their Abhinava Dance Company. The rendition of the abhang ‘Majhe maher pandari’, popularised by Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, was taken up to narrate the Panduranga story.

The detailing of all aspects of the story and the celebrations and festivities related to the temple were finely depicted, but the hurried pace in which the sequences moved negated the impact of Bhakti bhava that this composition warranted.

The other composition ‘Abhisar - A River’, based on the broad idea of reaching one’s goal, dealt with the journey of a river from its birthplace on top of a mountain to its culmination in the ocean. Clad in lovely blue costumes, the dancers depicted the movement of the river, its travel through varied seasons such as summer, monsoon and autumn, and the flora and fauna it supported through beautiful sancharis. The lilting musical score by Praveen Godkhindi and Tarun Bhattacharjee flowed

Nirupama and Rajendra's Kathak performance traced the journey of a river and the story of Panduranga



## Diverse streams

gently, resonating with the varied terrains and moods. The concept was by Shatavadhani Ganesh.

Three verses taken from Leela Sukar’s ‘Krishna Karnamritham’ highlighted the love of the gopis for Krishna – they addressed his flute in a sequence, a

second had a conversation between Krishna and complaining gopis, and the third featured the viraha sringara of the gopis.

Enacted through expressive storytelling and beautiful group formations, this abhinaya piece was engrossing.



The programme concluded with ‘Bahurang’, a grand crescendo of rhythm, filled with fast footwork, parans and chakkars, which are an intrinsic part of

Kathak vocabulary. The costume design heightened the impact. The stark white kurtas and colourful pyjamas made a strong visual impact.

Well-coordinated (Left) Nirupama and Rajendra and (top) Students of Abhinava Dance Company. PHOTO: B. VELANKANNI RAJ

## The art of being

Geeta Chandran’s ‘Samagati’ had a philosophical slant

V.V. Ramani

Dancers are constantly looking at new concepts and themes that could appeal to a larger audience base for their solo and group presentations.

Geeta Chandran and her Natya Vriksha dance company’s ‘Samagati’ (broadly defined as a union), at the Music Academy,



Interesting theme Geeta Chandran and her Natya Vriksha dance Company’s ‘Samagati’. PHOTO K. PICHUMANI

introduced the philosophical idea of purushartha.

Conveying the idea of coming together in a harmonious manner, Geetha’s recital was divided into four segments – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.

Geeta had conceived the concept of Dharma, an intensely personal state of belief, as a salutation to her Ishtha Devata – Nataraja, the lord of dance, through an

original composition ‘Shankara jatadhara’, written by Pootanery Subramaniam and composed by O.S. Arun. The attributes of Shiva and the five elements were explored.

Each of the four segments was presented as a group choreography and Geeta explored the permutations and combinations of movements.

A Purvikalyani jathiswaram by the Thanjavur Quartet, chosen

for the idea of ‘Artha’ was noteworthy for the rhythmic exploration of adavus and synchronised movements of the dancers. This highlighted the grandeur and beauty of the jathiswaram, a significant component of the margam.

‘Maaye’, the Shuddha Tarangini raga composition by Muthuswami Dikshitar, is a classic song in the Carnatic repertoire, with ideas embedded in it to throw light on Maya that ensnares us in a web of illusion. But, it then

goes on to seek the blessings of the goddess to free us from this bondage. The visualisation had a few interesting ideas, including the use of puppet-like movements to show how human beings are mere puppets in the hands of the creator. But, the overall ideation did not reflect the iconic stature and beauty of the kriti.

‘Moksha’ began with a powerful visual of a group of dancers moving towards a spotlight. It moved on to a sequence from Haveli Sangeet, where the thought of Krishna being ‘Adrishya’ for the gopis, and their journey through individual quests for attaining moksha were presented with interesting depictions. However, it soon began to meander.

That said, Samagati was impressive for its professional approach. The lighting design by Gyandev Singh enhanced the dynamism of the dance movements – he used a kaleidoscope of colours to suit the many moods.

## Here to stay

Pritam Das left the audience in awe with his striking stage presence

Rupa Srikanth

When Pritam Das, as famed devadasi Mannargudi Meenakshi, walked into the darkened court of Maharaja Serfoji and stood alone in a big circle of light and saluted the king, there was a loud gasp in the audience. His feminine mannerisms and the sheer audacity of the idea of impersonation created an eerie feeling of déjà vu. So far, we have only heard about court performances, and now we got to witness one.

Pritam, a disciple of Rama Vaidyanathan, has already made an impression as an agile Bharatanatyam dancer with great lines and good footwork and azhutham. His piercing eyes can tell a tale on their own. If he can sustain this standard, he can reach great heights.

The Devadasi act in ‘Nee saati dora’ (Bhairavi, Rupakam, Thanjavur Ponnayya) was full of seductive nuances and gestures, some so openly sensuous and inviting, one felt it was easier for a male dancer to get away with it.

Scholar Jeetender Krishna says he is sure that neither the king nor the dancers took the dance or the lyrics too seriously.

The devadasi says the king is incomparable, speaking with her eyes alone. While the king is

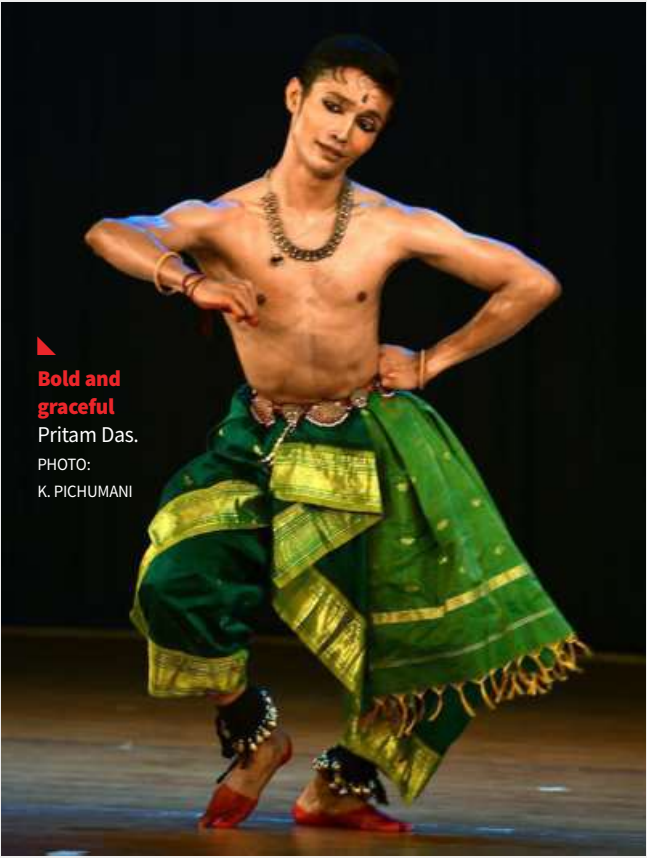
unresponsive, the dancer tries to seduce him, with suggestive gestures like showing a bee visiting a flower, when looking at him sensuously.

In another instance, Pritam mimed the nayaka bhava, the king getting dressed, doing his prayer, practising the arts, gifting other artistes, and coming to the woman at the end of the day. The varnam seemed like an overdose, but was not tiresome because of the daring.

Nattuvanar RLV Hemanth Lakshman and mridangist Charudutt V.V. did much to keep the pace of the programme buoyant. Music by Bijeeesh Krishna (vocal), Hariprasad Subramanian (flute) and Charulatha (veena) was enjoyable. The jathis were appealing and Pritam’s jumps into the full-sit Mandi adavus added to the vibrancy.

Pritam commenced with a melodious Pushanjali (R.K. Shriramkumar), followed by Annamacharya’s ‘Vande Vasudevam’ (Sri, Khanda Chapu) visualised by Anupama Kylash.

After the varnam, he presented a choreography of his guru Rama Vaidyanathan, a tongue-in-cheek Ninda Stuthi ‘Nadamadi thirindhra’ (Kamboji, Khanda Chapu, Papavinasa Mudaliar), finishing with a thillana (Kamavardhini, 19-beat Ragavardhini tala, Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar).



Bold and graceful Pritam Das. PHOTO: K. PICHUMANI

## Emotional roller coaster

When lyrics, mime and movement made a cohesive whole



Poignant (Left) Radhika Shetty. (Below) Navyashree. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

bear the separation from Muruga and wonders whether his heart has turned into stone. Though she is angry, she can’t help take pride in his greatness. Navyashree’s depiction was visually appealing, so were the jathis.

‘Jagadhodharana’ gave Navyashree immense scope for emoting, and the young dancer transformed herself into the quintessential mother.

On a quest ‘Manushi - A quest’, a thematic presentation by Radhika Shetty, was about the eternal search of four women (one of them is a river), born out of their unfulfilled desires and longings, but consistently backed by a strong will.

Radhika began with the journey of River Saraswati, once known as the cradle of Vedic culture, which mysteriously dried up

and came to be called ‘Gupta Gamini’ (the one who moves secretly, without being seen by anyone). Radhika depicted with great feeling an alive Saraswati in her halcyon days and her present, insignificant status. She concluded the episode wondering whether Saraswati is alive or not. Arjun Bharadwaj’s lyrics, enlivened by rhythmic inputs by D.V. Prasanna Kumar, were given life by Rohith Bhat Uppoor,



who sang it appropriately in raga Saraswati.

Next, Radhika portrayed Meerabai’s unquenchable desire for Krishna through three bhajans. Meera begins praising the virtues of Hari, ‘Hari gun gaavat nachoongi’, but when Hari does not appear in spite of a long wait, she starts wondering why she loved him at all (‘Tum sang kaahe peeth lagaayee’). But, she cannot be angry and indifferent for long.

Finally, she surrenders (‘Mhe tho charan lagee Gopal’). Radhika transformed herself into Meerabai, in her devotion, frustration and total submission.

Then, it was time to travel with Devaki, Krishna’s biological mother. When Devaki sees Krishna as a young man, she realises that she never had the good fortune to take care of him as a child and all that joy was experienced by Yasodha. She considers herself the last of all mothers (‘Thaayaril kadaiaayaina thaye’). She also feels sad that Krishna pointed out to Nandagopa (Nandhan petranan nalvina) as his father and not Vasudeva.

She calls herself the unfortunate sinner who could not experience the joy of Krishna’s childhood (‘Pillaimaiyinbaththai izhandha paaviyaen’). Radhika brought out Devaki’s pain and the sense of loss through her intensely-emotional depiction.

The stanzas chosen from Kulasekara Azhwar’s ‘Perumal Thirumozhi’ (a part of Nalayira Divya Prabandham), set to music by Sudha Raghuraman, graphically described Devaki’s sorrow and added poignancy to Radhika’s presentation.

Radhika concluded her ‘quest’ with the portrayal of Akka Mahadevi’s devotion through some of her select vachanas, incorporating them in a thillana. Akka Mahadevi’s constant desire to be united with God led her towards liberation. This section had rhythmic inputs by Vidyashree Radhakrishna.

Rohit Bhat Uppoor sang with involvement, fully aware of the impact of the lyrics in various languages. Vidyashree Radhakrishna’s nattuvangam, Vinay Nagarajan’s mridangam and Nithish Ammannaya’s flute came together, making Radhika’s presentation a memorable one.

B. Ramadevi

Nrityaangan, Mangaluru, had recently organised two Bharatanatyam performances with the support of the Karnataka Government’s Department of Kannada and

Culture. One was a recital by Navyashree K.N., disciple of P. Praveen Kumar, and the other, an endearing emotional journey ‘Manushi - on a quest’, by Radhika Shetty, founder-director of Nrityaangan.

Navyashree made an instant

appeal with her crisp adavus and fleeting facial expressions. The tasteful costume and jewellery enhanced the effect. She began with T.S. Kalyana Sundaram Pillai’s Kamboji varnam, ‘Naadhanai azhaiththu vaa sakhiyae’. The love-lorn nayika is unable to



# Warm melodies on cold evenings

Dancer and curator Uma Sharma on the making of the 25-year-old Swami Haridas Tansen Sangeet Nritya Samaroh, an important winter festival

### Shailaja Khanna

Delhi's biggest and most popular classical music festival entered its 25th year. Named after Swami Haridas, the father of Hindustani music, and his most iconic disciple Tansen, the Swami Haridas Tansen Sangeet Nritya Samaroh is a glittering affair, drawing crowds of over 3,000 people despite the cold weather.

As usual, it featured stalwarts – Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia, Begum Parveen Sultana, Uma Sharma and her students, Pt. Vishwamohan Bhatt and his son Salil with the Manganiyars, Pt Ulhas Kashalkar, Pt Venkatesh Kumar, Ustad Shujaat Khan, Ashwini Bhide Deshpande and Pt. Tejendra Narayan Mazumdar.

Organiser and veteran Kathak dancer Uma Sharma used to collaborate with Sri Gopal Goswami of the Banke Bihari Temple in Vrindavan for the Sammelan. However, with the passage of time, the character of the festival

changed. Uma broke away to create the Samaroh. She “wanted to present classical music in all its hues”.

Of course, Uma misses the ambience of Vrindavan, where the festival was originally held. “The first time, there were very few of us performing. This was inside Nidhi van, in front of Swami Haridas’ samadhi. We had to get permission to perform there.”

Later the festival expanded; to an open pandal. “The simple, unquestioning, eagerly-accepting audience was so refreshing.”

At the launch of the festival in Vrindavan, Sri Shrivats Goswami of the Radha Raman mandir spoke of the musical link between Vrindavan and Delhi.

For Uma, it’s been a long, arduous journey. “I was alone, but had the support of friends. When we moved to Delhi, we started with Ustad Asad Ali Khan’s concert in the basement theatre of the India Habitat Centre. When we finally moved to Modern School’s Sir Shankar Lal Hall, there were just 10 people to listen to Alam Khan. I was despondent and literally

cried. But the audience slowly reposed trust in us, and now every edition of the festival draws a full house.”

The venue now (Sir Shankar Lal Hall) is a large circular space with baithak seating as well as chairs. According to Uma, “I don’t want to hold this anywhere else since this venue has become synonymous with the festival. We get this hall totally free; for which I am grateful. The dates are available only in January, when it is usually freezing, but that doesn’t stop the audience from attending.”

Most artistes are repeat performers. Pt. Channulal Mishra does not sing now, but Uma wistfully wishes he would come again, just once. “I remember the informality of our artistic interaction - he just called out to me from the stage ‘Uma behen, aayiye, bhaav bataaye’ (Uma come up and show bhaav to these lines). I could not refuse, and went up the stage with the pallu tied around my waist, and danced to ‘Rang sari gulabi’,” she recalls.

The inheritors of the Tansen tradition are always invited. Pt Vishwamohan Bhatt and Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia are a must. “The younger generation needs to hear these veterans who have created their own

path in music. I always insisted on Ustad Aashish Khan coming from the U.S. for our festival. But, I hear he does not play much now.”

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, uniquely having been trained in the musical tradition of Tansen from both his ‘beenkar’ and ‘rababiya’ descendants, is another regular at the festival, with his sons Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash.

“This time, I was not able to invite a Dhrupad artiste. I plan to in the next edition, which will be a four-day event. I also may include a Carnatic musician. The roots of music and dance are the same. We had Bharatanatyam in Vrindavan, I remember,” says Uma.

The Swami Haridas Tansen festival has an informal feel. If the front rows remain vacant and the sponsors for whom seats are reserved don’t turn up, youngsters seated on the floor in front are permitted to occupy them. Uma remains determined to not make it a ticketed event, as “I want youngsters to hear the best without bothering to buy a ticket”.

With three artistes every evening, the time allotted for each musician has decreased. However, one remembers earlier editions of the festival going on well around midnight.

Shared memories make the venue a space for time-tested music and artiste-audience camaraderie.

In this edition, Ustad Shujaat Khan played a snatch of a thumri in raag Tilak Khamod that Uma Sharma had done abhinaya to when his father Ustad Vilayat Khan played it decades ago at this festival.

The festival this year concluded with the strains of Pt Ulhas Kashalkar singing the immortal Bhairavi thumri ‘Baju band khul khul jaaye’.

**Formidable line-up:** Senior musicians who performed this year .



The audience slowly reposed trust in us, and now every edition of the festival draws a full house



## Thematic production



As part of Ramotsav 2024 celebrations, students of Anitha Guha's Bharathanjali will present 'Parishvanga Pattabhishekam' a thematic production on February 17 and 18, between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Ram Ki Paidi, Sri Rama Janma Bhoomi, Ayodhya. It depicts the episodes of Sundara Kandan and Kishkinda Kandan from the Ramayana. Lyrics and music are by senior musician Neyveli Santhanagopalan, rhythmic interludes by 'keyboard' Subbu and choreography by Anitha Guha.



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## A storehouse of information

Marangiyur, a non-descript village in Villupuram district, lies on the banks of the river Thennpennar. Located in Thirukovilur taluk, this village has a temple dedicated to Shiva - Parvathavardhini Samedha Sri Ramalingeswarar temple. Marangiyur is said to have been ruled by the Malaya king Vikrama Chola Vanakularayan. During his rule, he issued an order that daily rituals at the temple are mandatory.

The Ramalingeswarar temple also has a Ramayana connect. It is said to have been established by Rama, hence the name.

Apart from this, there are many inscriptions that talk about the rich history associated with this temple. They mention various endowments and grants that were made to this temple by several rulers.

An inscription from the fourth regnal year of Raja Mahendradeva registers a gift of 500 *kuli* of land by Rajendrasingha

Chaturvedimangalam.

According to an inscription belonging to Kulothunga III, the Malaiyaman chief of Kiliyur, Edhirilichola Vanakularayan announced a waiver of taxes for various devadana lands that belonged to the temple. An inscription from the sixth year of Vira Rajendra (Kulothunga III) states that Madalvi, daughter of Kolangondal, a devaradiyar of the temple, constructed the thirumaligai and tiruvasal at the temple.

Apart from these, there are more than 30 rock edicts in the temple that speak of the contributions by the subsequent rulers. Over the years, this ancient Shiva temple got dilapidated. To bring back the lost glory, the people of Marangiyur have taken up the task of renovating it. With repair works inching towards completion, the temple is getting ready for its consecration. For details contact Sri Ramalingeswar Trust 98404 25253.

**Solo performances**

Narada Gana Sabha Trust, has organised the Bharatanatyam solo performances by Amritha Jayakrishnan, disciple of Vidya Subramanian (6 p.m.) and Aparna Devarajan, disciple of G. Narendra and Mahalakshmi Kameswaran (7.30 p.m.) on February 17 at Swami Haridhos Giri Hall.

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**FREE ENTRY**



V. Subhasri's concert highlighted Papanasam Sivan's love for Thamizh

H. Ramakrishnan

Kedaram Trust had recently organised V. Subhasri's concert dedicated to Thamizh Tyagayya Papanasam Sivan. Subhasri, a student of senior musician S. Sowmya, began with 'Swami naan undan adimai', the Nattakurinji varnam in Tamil by Papanasam Sivan, setting the tone for a vibrant concert. This Tamil composition on Nataraja has sahityas for the charanam swaras. Subhasri next rendered the Bowli kriti 'Karunanidhiye thaye' (Misra Chapu) on Karpakambal of



Exuberant V. Subhasri. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mylapore Kapaleeswarar temple. The swaras were at the pallavi and Subashri chose to sing the charanam after the kalpanaswara. Her Begada raga alapana was a vision in tone. On the violin, Bombay Madhavan etched an equally charming elucidation. 'Ganarasamudan' in Rupakam on Muruga was an energetic rendition. It should be mentioned here that this young vocalist could achieve a perfect balance between form and content. The swaraprastara at the anupallavi line 'Deenaparaadeena sujana' sustained the momentum.

**Brief alapana**  
'Ini oru kanam unai maraven' (Sriranjani-Rupakam) on Krishna was a neat rendition. After a short alapana in Yadhukulakamboji, Subhasri rendered 'Kumaran thaal paninde thuthi' on Muruga, a favourite kriti of the legendary

musician D.K. Jayaraman. Subashri's Simhendramadhyamam alapana was intensely sensitive as she journeyed through its various highs and lows, projecting well the essence of the raga in the introductory segment itself. Bombay Madhavan responded adequately. The chosen composition was 'Ithaparamenum iru ulakilum' on Muruga, which has two Tisra nadai segments. Subashri chose 'Amarulakum akhilavuyirum' for niraval and swaras, displaying her grip over laya. She rendered the swaras in tisram and chatusram. Duetting with S. Krishna (ghatam) in the tani avartanam, Akshay Ananthapadmanabhan (mridangam) created varied dimensions of rhythm. His korvai in the initial round, blending aesthetics and tempo, was appealing. Subashri concluded her recital with the Begada kriti 'Shri madhava vasudeva', the only Sanskrit piece in this concert.



Vocal concerts

Neyveli Narayanan Center for Performing Arts has organised the following vocal concerts today at Arkay Convention Centre, Mylapore. 5 p.m.: Radhika Kannan and 6.30 p.m.: S. Saketharaman.

Tirtha aradhana

Thirupoonthuruthy Sri Narayana Tirtha Swamigal Trust has organised special events to mark the 278th aradhana of Narayana Tirtha. Inaugurated yesterday, it is being held at his Brindavan, in Thirupoonthuruthy, Thanjavur. Today's line-up begins with the recitation of Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam by Lakshmi Venkatesan (9 a.m.), followed by Ilaya Raja Odhuvar's Panniru Tirumurai rendition (11 a.m.) and namasankirtanam (8 p.m.). Programmes on February 17, to begin at 7.45 a.m. with Unchavritti and nagaswaram recital, will concludes with Anjaneya Utsavam at 8.45 p.m.

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