

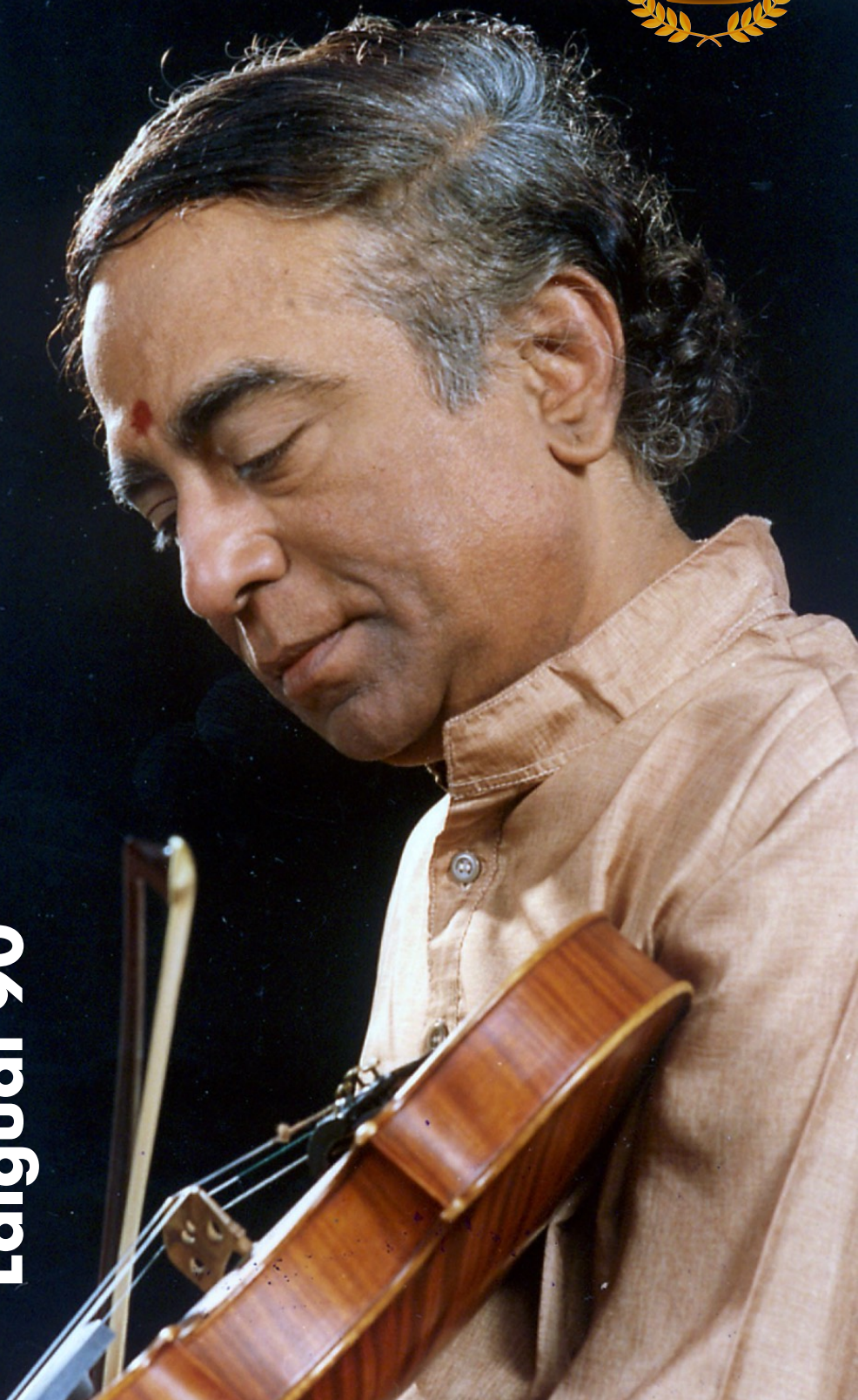
Commemorating the 90th birth anniversary year
of Musical Genius Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman



Lalitha Kala Tarangini

Premier Quarterly Music Magazine from
Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira
Issue 1, March 2020

Lalgudi 90



Malladi Brothers Honoured

The title "Sangeetha Vedantha Dhurina" was presented to Malladi Brothers (Sreeramprasad and Ravikumar) in the divine presence of "H H Sri Sri Yadugiri Yathiraja Narayana Ramanuja Jeeyar" on 19 January 2020.

The title carries a purse of Rs. One Lakh each to Sreeramkumar and Ravikumar, a silver medal and a citation. This award is instituted in memory of our founder Shri. G Vedantha Iyengar who started the institution 64 years ago.



Standing Left to Right - Shri. GV Krishna Prasad, Honorary Secretary, SRLKM, Shri HR Yathiraj, President, SRLKM, H H Sri Sri Yadugiri Yathiraja Narayana Ramanuja Jeeyar, Prof. Trichy Sankaran

Sitting Left to Right - Sreeramprasad and Ravikumar

ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ ಜಗದ್ಗುರು ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಮಹಾಸಂಸ್ಥಾನಮ್

Sri Sri Jagadguru Ramanujacharya Mahasamstanam

ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ ಜಗದ್ಗುರು ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಮಹಾಸಂಸ್ಥಾನಂ

ಶ್ರೀ ಯದುಗಿರಿ ಯತಿರಾಜ ಮಠ

SRI YADUGIRI YATHIRAJA MUTT

(Moola Stanam :- Tirunarayanapuram - Melukote-571431)

Founder Acharya : Sri Ramanujacharya



Ref No. :

Date : 18 March 2020

ಪಿಟೀಲಿನ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಟ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್

ಜಗತ್ತಿನಿಂದ ತೀರ್ಥಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಶ್ರೀರಂಗಂ ಉಭಯ ಕಾವೇರಿಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ನೆಲೆಸಿದೆ. ಸಪ್ತಪ್ರಾಕಾರಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಪವಡಿಸಿರುವ ಶ್ರೀರಂಗನಾಥ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಚಂದ್ರನಿಂದ ಆರಾಧಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ದಿವ್ಯಮೂರ್ತಿ. ಶ್ರೀರಂಗಕ್ಕೆ ತುಂಬಾ ಸಮೀಪದ ಗ್ರಾಮವೇ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ. ಈ ಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ 17-9-1930ರಂದು ಒಂದು ಸಂಗೀತ ಕಾವೇರಿಯ ಉದಯವಾಯಿತು. ಈ ಶಿಶುವೇ ಜಗತ್ತಿನಿಂದ ಪಿಟೀಲುವಾದಕರಾದ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್. ತಂದೆ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಗೋಪಾಲಅಯ್ಯರ್ ಸಂತ ತ್ಯಾಗರಾಜಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳ ನೇರ ಶಿಷ್ಯಪರಂಪರೆಗೆ ಸೇರಿದವರು. ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರಿಗೆ ಬಾಲ್ಯದಿಂದಲೇ ತಂದೆಯವರಲ್ಲೇ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪಾಠ. ಸದಾ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಕಠಿಣವಾದ ಸಾಧನೆ. ತಂದೆ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಶಿಸ್ತಿನ ಅಧ್ಯಾಪಕರು. ಮಗ ಜಯರಾಮನ್ ಮುಂದೆ ಜಗತ್ತಿನಿಂದ ಪಿಟೀಲುವಾದಕರಾಗಬೇಕೆಂದೇ ಹಂಬಲಿಸಿದರು. ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ನಿರಂತರ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪಾಠ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಮಗ ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರ ಬೆರಳುಗಳು ಪಿಟೀಲಿಗೆ ಮೀಸಲಾಗಿರಬೇಕೆಂದು ಅವರ ಹಂಬಲವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರ ಬೆರಳುಗಳು ಸದಾ ಪಿಟೀಲಿನ ತಂತಿಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಹರಿದಾಡುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಇಂತಹ ಶಿಸ್ತಿನ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಠಿಣ ತಪಸ್ಸಿನ ಫಲ ಮುಂದೆ ಜಯರಾಮನ್ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ಎತ್ತರಕ್ಕೆ ಏರಿದ ಕಲಾವಿದರಾದರು. ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್ ಗಾಯಕರಾಗಿಯೂ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಿಗೆ ಬಂದವರು. ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಕೃತಿಕಾರರಾಗಿಯೂ ಖ್ಯಾತಿ ಪಡೆದವರು. ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿಯವರ ತಿಲ್ಲಾನ ರಚನೆಗಳು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದಲ್ಲಿ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರು ಹಲವು ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಹಂಸದ್ವನಿ, ಗರುಡದ್ವನಿ, ದೇವಗಾಂಧಾರಿ, ಆಂದೋಲಿಕ, ಕಲ್ಯಾಣಿ, ಬಹುದಾರಿ ಮುಂತಾದ ರಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ತಿಲ್ಲಾನಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇವರ ಕೃತಿಗಳು ಭರತನಾಟ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಉತ್ತಮವಾದ ಕೃತಿಗಳು ತಮಿಳು, ತೆಲುಗು, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಮುಂತಾದ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇವರ ರಚನೆಗಳು ಅಪಾರ ಮೆಚ್ಚುಗೆಗೆ ಪಾತ್ರವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸುಮಾರು 25 ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರೊಡನೆ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ನಿಕಟ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ ನನಗಾಯಿತು. ಆಗ ಶ್ರೀ ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರ ವಿದ್ವತ್ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆ, ಸರಳತೆ, ನನ್ನನ್ನು ಆಕರ್ಷಿಸಿತು. ಆಗ ಶ್ರೀ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿಯವರ ತಿಲ್ಲಾನಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಒಂದು ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರವನ್ನು ನಮ್ಮ ಆದರ್ಶ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಅದೊಂದು ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶ. ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಂಚೆ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿಯವರು ನಮ್ಮೊಡನೆ ಕುಳಿತು ಹಲವು ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ನೆನಪು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಂಗೀತ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯ ರಾಗಗಳ ವಿಸ್ತಾರ ಕೃತಿಗಳ ಮಹತ್ವ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಗಾಢವಾದ ಅನುಭವಗಳನ್ನು ಹಂಚಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರ ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಖರತೆ ಇತ್ತು, ಮಾಧುರ್ಯವಿತ್ತು. ಎಂತಹವರನ್ನೂ ಮೋಡಿ ಮಾಡುವ ಮಾತು ಅವರದು. ಆಗಲೇ ಶ್ರೀಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿಯವರು ತಿಲ್ಲಾನ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಸಮಗ್ರವಾದ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರವನ್ನು ನಮಗಾಗಿ ನಡೆಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟರು. ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರದ ಸಮಾರೋಪದಂದು ಅವರ ಅದ್ಭುತವಾದ ಕಛೇರಿ ಸಂತ ತ್ಯಾಗರಾಜರ ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಂದು ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತಪಡಿಸಿ ಎಲ್ಲರನ್ನೂ ತಮ್ಮ ಪಿಟೀಲಿನ ಮೋಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿಹಾಕಿಬಿಟ್ಟರು. ಆ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶ ನನಗೆ ಇನ್ನೂ ಹಸಿರಾಗಿದೆ.

श्रीः ॥
॥ श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः ॥

श्री श्री जगद्गुरु रामानुजाचार्य महासंस्थानम्

Sri Sri Jagadguru Ramanujacharya Mahasamstanam

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ಶ್ರೀ ಯದುಗಿರಿ ಯತಿರಾಜ ಮಠ

SRI YADUGIRI YATHIRAJA MUTT

(Moola Stanam :- Tirunarayanapuram - Melukote-571431)

Founder Acharya : Sri Ramanujacharya



Ref No. :

Date : 18 March 2020

ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿಯವರ ಪಿಟೀಲುವಾದನ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಸುಂದರ ಹೂತೋಟ. ಆ ಹೂತೋಟ ಎಂದೂ ಒಣಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಸದಾ ಸರ್ವದಾ ಅವರ ಕೃತಿಗುಚ್ಛ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಲಲಿತ ಕಲಾಮಂದಿರ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರಿಗೆ ಒಂದು ಅಪೂರ್ವವಾದ ನೆನಪಿನ ಕೊಡುಗೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ನನಗೆ ತುಂಬಾ ಸಂತೋಷ ತಂದಿದೆ. ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಜಿ.ವಿ. ಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ರಸಾದ್‌ರವರ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನದ ಫಲವೇ ಈ ವಿಶೇಷ ಸಂಚಿಕೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ರಸಾದ್‌ರವರನ್ನು ಹಾರ್ದಿಕವಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಂದಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ.

ವಿ|| ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ.ವಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ರಸಾದ್‌ರವರ ಸತತ ಪರಿಶ್ರಮದಿಂದ ಲಲಿತಾಕಲಾ ತರಂಗಿಣಿ ಈ ಸಂಚಿಕೆ ಸುಂದರವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅವರನ್ನು ಅಭಿನಂದಿಸುತ್ತ ಪ್ರಕೃತ ವಿ|| ಲಾಲ್ಗುಡಿ ಜಯರಾಮನ್‌ರವರ 90ನೇಯ ಹುಟ್ಟುಹಬ್ಬದಂದು ಹೊರ ಬರುತ್ತಿರುವ ವಿಶೇಷ ಸಂಚಿಕೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪ್ರಪಂಚಕ್ಕೆ ಒಂದು ಉತ್ತಮ ಕೊಡುಗೆ

ಇತಿರಮ್

ಶ್ರೀ ಯತಿರಾಜಃ

ಶ್ರೀ ಯತಿರಾಜಃ

Translation of Pujya Sri Sri Yadugiri Yathiraja Narayana Ramanuja Jeeyar's message

Violin Maestro Lalgudi G Jayaraman

World-renowned sacred pilgrim place of Srirangam is located on an island surrounded by river Cauvery and its distributary (Ubhaya Cauvery). The main deity is Sri Ranganatha who is in a reclining position. The Lord is enshrined in the centre of seven prakaarams. This holy idol of Ranganatha has been worshipped even by Sri Ramachandra.

The village of Lalgudi is very close to Srirangam. On the 17th September 1930, the village witnessed the birth of Sangeetha Cauvery, who is none other than the world-renowned violin maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman. His father Gopala Iyer belonged to the direct shishya parampara (Lineage) of Saint Thyagaraja. He was initiated into music at a very young age by his father which was followed by rigorous sadhana. His father aspired to see his son become a world-famous violin maestro and worked hard with his son to make it possible. This meticulous penance of practicing on the violin has made Jayaraman scale great heights and become an artiste of the highest calibre. Lalgudi Jayaraman was also a vocalist and was well known as a composer of thillanas and several kritis. Lalgudi's thillanas are very famous and sought after. He has also written many kritis and thillanas in ragas like Hamsadwani, Garudadwani, Devagandhari, Andholika, Kalyani, Bahudari, etc. He has composed in Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit. These kritis and thillanas are also very suited for Bharatanatyam. They have all been well received and very much appreciated.

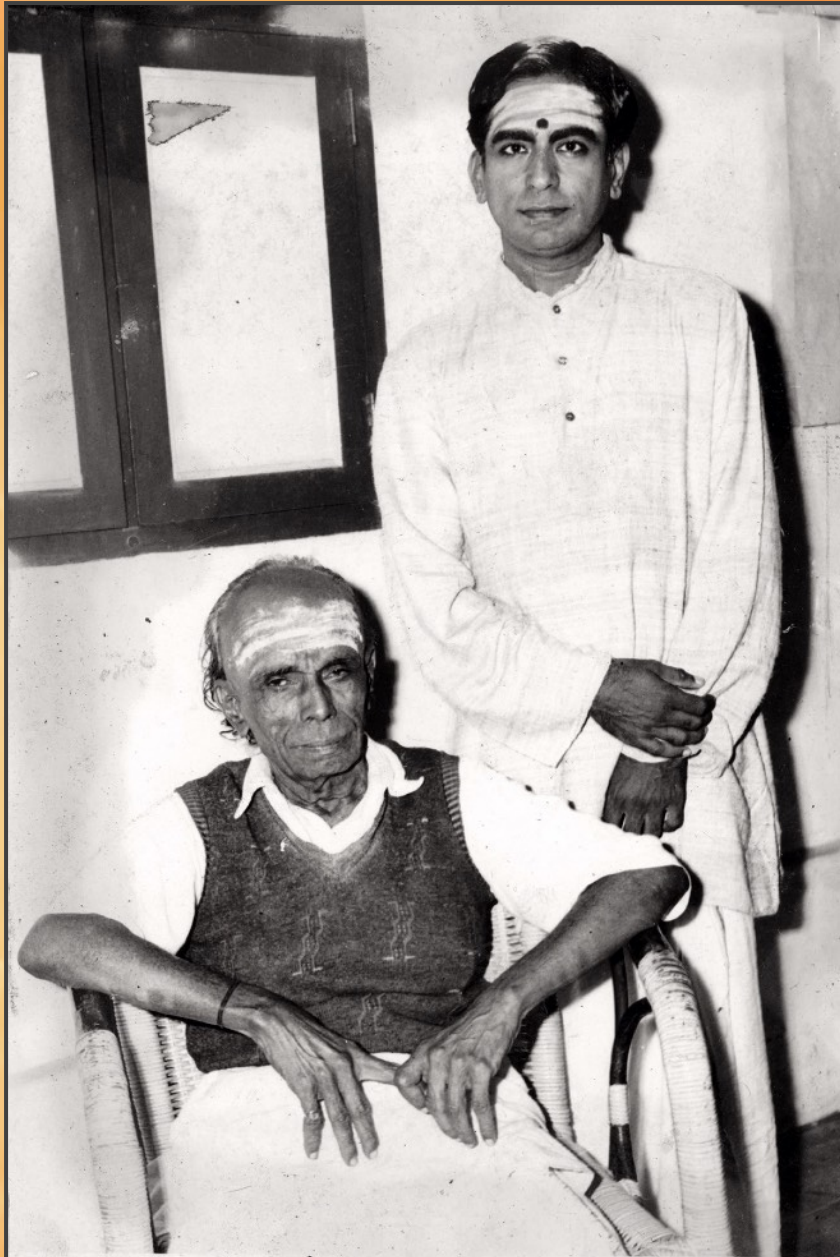
I came into close contact with Lalgudi Jayaraman around 25 years ago. We had arranged a workshop on his thillanas through our Adarsha Academy of Indian culture. I was overwhelmed and impressed by his vidwat as well as his humility. Before the workshop began, we had the opportunity to interact with him. It was one of a kind, wherein he shared his profound knowledge and his experiences pertaining to music, how to elaborate ragas with special attributes, the importance of kritis and so on. He spoke with clarity, firmness and on the whole, could mesmerise anyone with the sweetness in his speech. He concluded his detailed workshop on thillanas with a superb kutcheri on saint Thyagaraja's rare kritis and had all of us spellbound to his violin. The event remains evergreen in my memory.

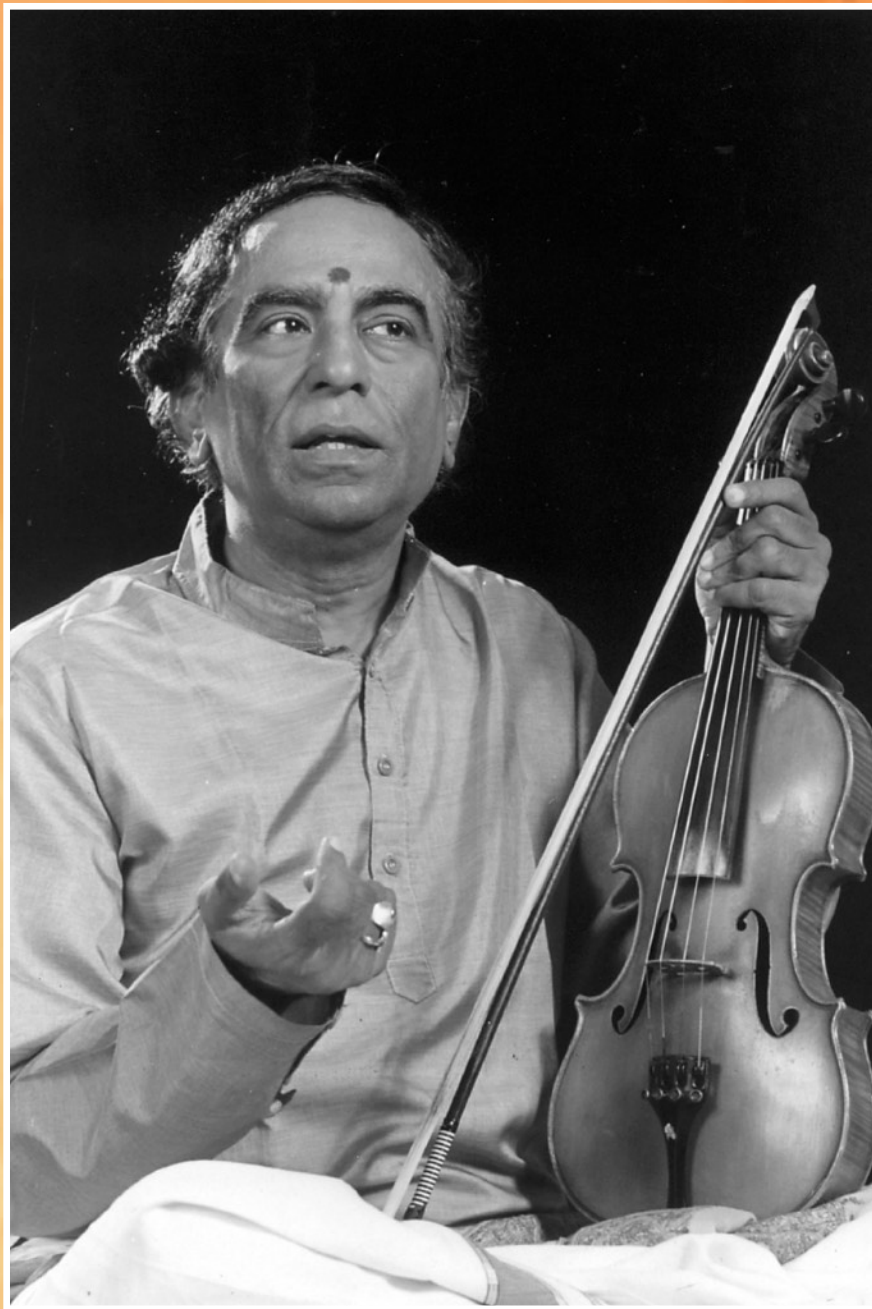
Lalgudi Jayaraman's violin playing is like a beautiful garden in the world of music. His kritis are the flowers in this garden and these flowers can never wither away.

I am happy Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira is bringing out a special edition of Lalgudi Jayaraman. This special issue is due to the tireless efforts of Sri GV Krishna Prasad. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to him for this achievement.

This special issue of Lalitha Kala Tarangini on Lalgudi Jayaraman is getting published on the occasion of Vidwan's 90th birth anniversary. Without a doubt, this issue will be a gift to the world of music.

dedicated
to
a guru and father
who dreamt and developed
a
Musical Genius





'I want to be a violinist in all my future births'

-Lalgudi Jayaraman

March 2020

Shri. GV Krishnaprasad is the brain behind 'Lalgudi 90' a special edition to commemorate the 90th birth anniversary year of Lalgudi Jayaraman. This is our 'Silver Jubilee Edition' and we are honoured to feature one of the tallest musical personalities in this edition. We are very fortunate to get the best of the support from the Lalgudi Family and connected people for this edition.

God created Lalgudi Jayaraman with a brain that can multi-task and his capabilities went beyond the realms of music into areas like Sound Engineering, Choreography, etc. He is considered one of the most intelligent musicians our music has ever produced and his instrument sang Vocal Music with a pleasing melody. He has to his credit creating a Violin playing technique 'Lalgudi Bani' that enables people to experience sahithyam beautifully played on the Violin. He made revolutionary changes to the violin playing techniques that were accepted by his generations above like Papa Venkataramaiah, Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, Mysore Chowdiah, etc.

TR Subramaniam says 'All through history, Karnatic music has been kept aloft mainly by vocalists but there have been rare instrumentalists like Lalgudi Jayaraman who produced the magical effect of Vocal music on his instruments'. TN Seshagopalalan says the ease and aplomb with which Lalgudi accompanied Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer was amazing. RK Srikantan hailed Lalgudi Jayaraman as the true "Nadopasaka", Perfectionist and Strict Disciplinarian" during the "Life Time Achievement Award" function at The Madras Music Academy.

It will not be out of place to say that the Lalgudi family created one of the outstanding documentation of his musical journey that forms a Standard Operating Procedure for the rest of the world to follow. Many testimonials have been used during the course of this edition but 'An Incurable Romantic' by Lakshmi Devnath stands out tall. Budding musicians and parents will do

well to read this book several times that guides one to manage the treacherous route to be a successful musician.

We dedicate this edition of the magazine to the man who was largely responsible for shaping Lalgudi's music career and developing a genius out of 'Lalgudi Jayaraman' Shri. Valadi Radhakrishna Gopala Iyer.

Our 65th year music festival held during January 2020 was the longest ever festival stretching for 3 weeks with top-notch artists participating in it. It is another year of the meticulously planned, highly successful and hugely attended festival. Needless to say Shri. GV Krishnaprasad worked behind the scene tirelessly to make it happen. Shri. Vedanta Iyengar father of Shri. GV Krishnaprasad was not only a respected teacher and scholar but a great social worker. Today his lifelong dreams have been realised by Shri. GV Krishnaprasad and his Sisters by the sheer success these festivals are enjoying year after year.

Padma Shri Prof. R Satyanarayana, a highly respected musicologist and dance scholar passed away on 16 January 2020 (aged 92). We pay homage to him in this edition.

Anand S

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Photo Courtesy - Paniraj, The Hindu archives, Personal collection of Lalgudi Family, Personal Collections of Dr. Trichy Sankaran, Personal collections of Prof. Ramesh, Personal collections of SN Ramprasad, Shree Rama Seva Mandali, The Bangalore Gayana Samaja.

Visit us online @ www.srlkmandira.org and share your feedback at lkt_srlkm@yahoo.com

Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira (SRLKM) founded by Shri. G Vedanta Iyengar in the year 1955 is rendering yeomen service in the field of music. In addition to music classes, music concerts are held all through the year. The significant festivals are Sankranti and Spring music festivals. Mandira also takes pride in conducting music awareness program, music workshops, Lecture demonstrations etc. Entry to all program conducted by the Mandira is free as the aim of the institution is to enable everyone to listen to the best of the music and to propagate Karnatic Classical Music.

"Lalitha Kala Tarangini" publication is fostered by Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira, disseminates knowledge in the area of Karnatak Classical Music and bring to light talent and excellence in this area. We believe this is just another step towards preserving and promoting this great Indian fine art.

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Lalitha Kala Tarangini *Inbox*

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To the Editor,

'Veena Dhanammal - Saraswati incarnate' by Ravi and Sridhar is a detailed yet valuable story of the life and achievements of the pioneer Veena Vidushi of yore. Dhanammal was a beacon of pure and standard music who had influenced many a great musician of those times. The vintage pictures add to the special feature. 'Thevaaram', by Ranjani Arjun Shankar is a brief and beautiful write-up with all the 'must-know details' of Thevaaram - the Tamil Saivite literary treasure. Its place of pride in Carnatic music is well brought out. The transliteration of Tamil words is very helpful. The links must be useful to serious students and rasikas of music. The brief article on G Harishankar - the Kanjira Wizard is a nice tribute to the genius by senior laya vidwan Sri KS Kalidas. Yes, he was peerless in the art of Kanjira playing.

With Regards,
S Sivaramakrishnan, Chennai

To Shri. Krishnaprasad,

It is worth reading and preserving. I also appreciate the hard work behind it.

Prof. Mysore V Subramanya

To the Editor,

A priceless issue containing interesting info on several greats in a gripping style.

KV Chellappa, Chennai

To Shri. GV Krishnaprasad,

Thank you very much for sending the Magazine "Lalitha Kala Tarangini"

It has a sea of information. The articles on Veena Dhanammal and Eminent Guru Sri R.K Srikantan are very informative. I had the great fortune of learning rare kritis of "Sri Jayachamarajendra wodeyar" when R.K Srikantan Sir conducted a workshop in Mysore. The Magazine is elegant and very colourful.

Wish you all a very Happy New Year 2020

Regards
Rajyashree Josyer Shrikanth

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Shri. Lalgudi GJR Krishnan and Smt. Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi for their valuable support during the course of this edition 'Lalgudi 90'. They made time for this important edition though they are very busy artists traveling most of the time. The photographs provided by them are very precious and helps our readers to create a picture of the scenarios depicted instantaneously.

I want to thank Guru and our senior associate Vidwan KS Kalidas for guidance during the course of this edition. His interview with Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman in 1987 has been converted into an interesting article.

I thank 'The Bangalore Gayana Samaja' for sharing very valuable recordings and photographs going back to the '80s on Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman. HK Gurunath, son of late Shri. H Kamalanath, Ex-President of The Bangalore Gayana Samaja obliged us with valuable recordings and photographs of Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman.

I want to especially thank my good friend Shri. Shailesh Ramamurthy, who has been an ardent admirer of Lalgudi's music since his childhood. He has been a pillar of support all through this edition and helped in building content that is very interesting. His discussions on Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman's music have been very valuable.

I am grateful to Shri. SN Ramprasad of 'Shree Rama-seva Mandali', Chamaraajapet, Bangalore who shared vintage photographs of Lalgudi performing for Mandali from 1950 onwards.

Last but not the least, I want to thank authors Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. Trichy Sankaran, Prof. Ramesh Balasubramaniam, Dr. Shreekantham Nagendra Shastry, CP Chikkanna, Vid. Shankari Krishnan, C Ramakrishnan, KS Raghunathan, Sachi R Sachidananda, Shailesh Ramamurthy, Rajashree Yoganand, Dr. Mysore Manjunath, for contributing to 'Lalitha Kala Tarangini - Lalgudi 90' all of whom agreed to instantaneously support this edition out of sheer passion and love they had towards Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman.

SRLKM will be forever grateful to all the contributors for bringing this special edition.

S Anand, Editor



Our Upcoming Programmes

19 April
2020
5.30 pm
Sunday

SRLKM Auditorium
Pushpa Kashinath (Veena)
R Adamya (Mridanga)
SN Narayanamurthy (Ghatam)

07 to 10 May
2020
5.30 pm

The Bangalore Gayana Samaja
Founders day celebration programs at Bangalore Gayana Samaja, details as per back cover page

23 May
2020
5.30 pm
Saturday

SRLKM Auditorium
Manasa Nayana (Vocal)
Charulatha Ramanujam (Violin)
KU Jayachandra Rao (Mridangam),
Omkar Rao (Ghatam)

14 June
2020
5.30 pm
Sunday

SRLKM Auditorium
Dr. Sheshaprasad (Vocal)
Smt. Nalina Mohan (Violin)
Sunil Subrahmanya (Mridangam)
BS Raghunandan (Ghatam)

21 June
2020
5.30 pm
Sunday

SRLKM Auditorium
Music concert in association with
Sri Tyagaraja Gana Sabha.(Golden Jubilee
celebrations concert)

Homage to Prof. R Satyanarayana



Vidwan Dr. Shreekantham Nagendra Shastry, Bangalore

I don't write for those who are of the opinion that - 'music' as an art form is only meant to be 'listened to' and 'Theory' of such an art form is only textual in nature, devoid of any connection with practice and deserves its place at the most in the shelves of an oriental library or museum. I am of the firm belief that even in music as a practical art form or in its theory, there is a spiritual essence emanating from all - encompassing primordial source, which has wherewithal to take human race forward. My humble pursuit through writing is finding this very essence - Says Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. R. Satyanarayana, in his introduction to his magnum



opus - "Sangeeta Ratnakara - Swaragata Adhyaya" of Sarangadeva. These words reflect his philosophy and lifelong mission. Dr. R. Satyanarayana, fondly known as Ra.Sa. to all of his students and admirers - perhaps was the foremost musicologist and danceologist in past century, who assiduously worked in the field of musicology like none other. He perhaps single-handedly sensitised both musicians and connoisseurs towards 'theory of music' and made a whole lot of difference in the field of Karnataka classical music - by bridging yawning gap between 'Lakshya' and 'Lakshana'.

Born on 09 May, 1927 in Mysore, third of illustrious Mysore brothers - learnt music from his mother - Smt Varalakshmi. Smt Varalakshmi was a fine Veena artist and a direct disciple of great scholar Veena Sundarashastri (Pupil of Veena Padmanabhaiah). While, Ra.Sa, learnt music and was proficient in practical part of it, his love and meditative focus was firmly set on 'Theory of music', by & large on Indian classical art forms. A chemistry professor by profession, dedicated entire life in study of shastras and published ground breaking research work spanning over 20,000 pages both in Kannada and English. A multi linguist, proficient in many languages including Kannada, Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Persian, English to name a few.

RaSa's areas of study were vast. His research encompassed not only music but dance, Sri Vidya, History, Philosophy, Vedic studies, Smritis, aesthetics and many more. His independent research works and translations - were of different class all together. RaSa's unwavering commitment, unquestionable integrity and immense courage, culminated in his writings and produced some of the greatest works in the field of Indian classical arts, especially in classical

music. His seminal work on Matanga's 'Bruhad-deshi' stands as testimonial for his scholarship. It takes immense courage for a musicologist to reconstruct one of the earliest and brilliant works in the Indian classical music - from various resources. Anyone who is associated with music, must be forever indebted to him for the same. His foreword for "Brihaddeshi" spanning over few hundreds of pages could become, an independent research work of highest order on its own. 'Ele- A study' (composition form of yesteryears) - is similar effort in the field of music. One would wonder, what if RaSa had taken endeavour and completely translated Sarangadeva's Sangeetaratnakara. His voluminous work on 'Swaragata Adhyaha' itself is a magnum opus. His 'Karnataka Sangeeta Vahini' could easily be termed as his master piece and it is to RaSa's credit that 'Karnataka classical music' is established as truly 'Karnataka's many ways. RaSa conclusively demonstrates the origin of our music and its irrefutable connections with Karnataka with his remarkable research.

None of his translations are 'mere' translations, but work of intense research which are full of deep insights and have immense capability to make further inroads into the subject and pave the way for future research. 'Sangeeta Sudhakara' of Haripaladeva, 'Pundarika Mala' 'Chaturdandi Prakashika', 'Abhinava Bharata sangraha', 'Nartana Nirnaya', 'Kohalamatam', 'Veena Lakshanam' are some of the critical editions of Sanskrit treatises while independent research works include 'Veena Lakshana vimarshe', 'Music of Madhva Monks', 'Suladis and Ugabhogas', 'Dharmika Samskaragalalli Sangeeta', 'Karnataka Sangeeta Vahini', 'Studies In Indian dance', 'Meaning in Music', 'Karnataka Music as Aesthetic form', 'Srividya Shodashika', etc.

RaSa as a researcher is of great importance for many reasons. First, he was one of the very few scholars who could identify where shastras have stagnated. Secondly, devising means of taking them forward. He not only picked up problem areas but exhaustively explored and furthered the areas of research. Scope of research grew leaps and bounds through his critical studies. As

stated earlier, his courage as a researcher and being a constant seeker of truth - helped him to correct many misconceptions in treatises and also wrongly held views in the field of Karnataka classical music. 'Misconceptions regarding Sri Vidyaranya's Sangeeta Sara' is one such example. While he proves that it was indeed Sri Vidyaranya's work, but he also conclusively demonstrates that currently available work is certainly not the original work of Sri Vidyaranya. His research on Haridasa movement and their contributions towards music is laudable. His elaborate notes on Suladis, Phenomenon Jhompata (an equivalent of Aadi Tala) transformation which lead to easier and universal system of talas are noteworthy. He points out at glaring anomaly of our textual tradition where in the most important lakshya form such as 'pada/Kritis' do not find place and goes on reasoning them out in detail and also attempts to construct 'theory' for such forms. Success of RaSa's research lies in these critical interventions.

Apart from musicology and research in the field of dance, RaSa was a Sri Vidya practitioner and known by his deekshanama 'Satyanandanatha'. He initiated lot of disciples into the 'Kaadi' marga of Srividya tradition, including the author herein.

While recognition, accolades came in search of him till his last breath, the last notable recognition being 'Padmashri' from Govt. of India, he never truly went after any such recognitions and lived in his own blissful world of 'Adhyayana' and 'Adhyapana'.

When he left for heavenly abode of Sri Bhagvati on 16 Jan 2020, it was fitting that last rites were performed as per Srividya tradition by his son RS Nandakumar and Disciples.

His was a Kaarana Janma (born with a mission) and he went about his pursuit like a Poornavata (full-filling the incarnation completely). The least that we could do is to try and tread the path which he has laid before us.

Lalgudi Jayaraman on Palani Subramania Pillai



*Vidwan KS Kalidas interviewing Lalgudi Jayaraman in 1987,
Courtesy - <http://www.palanisubramaniapillai.org>
Translation credit, S Anand, Bangalore*

It was another December season in 1952 and the Madras Music Academy concerts were scheduled at the makeshift venue of PS Senior Secondary High School. One of the secretaries of the Music academy bumped into young Lalgudi Jayaraman and enquired if he would accompany Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer for a demonstration of the 'Simhanandana Tala' (complicated tala of 128 beats to a cycle). Lalgudi's name had been recommended by none other than Palani Subramania Pillai.

Lalgudi was surprised and humbled by the gesture from Palani Subramania Pillai who was the first senior musician in those days to encourage and promote the youngster.

Now it is all history how Lalgudi Jayaraman did his homework and excelled in the demonstration on 25 December 1952 accompanying Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer. The fact remains that Palani Subramania Pillai encouraged and supported Lalgudi Jayaraman to grow in stature till Palani passed away on 27 May 1962.

Reproduced below is an interview by Vidwan KS Kalidas, a direct disciple of Palani Subramania Pillai, where Lalgudi Jayaraman shares his experience with the legendary percussionist.

How did you first meet Palani Subramania Pillai? When did Palani hear and enjoy your playing? When did he arrange concerts for you with other maestros?

When I think of respectful Palani Subramania Pillai, what comes to my mind is his dignity, helping nature, his graceful personality, and his

Vidwath. He was as great a human being as he was a great Vidwan.

Palani Subramania Pillai used to live in Trichy near Town Station and I lived in Lalgudi. As a boy, I have heard his concerts with great maestros at Malaikottai Nootrukka Mandapam, Tiruchirappalli Vinayaka Chaturthi Utsavam, etc. I first met him in 1948 and it was PA Venkatraman (Poovalur Venkatraman) a senior disciple of Palani who introduced me to him. I and PA Venkatraman were participating in concerts together and it was his wish that I meet with Palani Anna and it was also his desire that I should play along with his Guru, Sri Palani. He wanted Palani to listen first to my violin and it happened in 1948.

Palani Subramania Pillai was organising a festival in Palani every year and he arranged two concerts for me in that festival through PA Venkatraman. I performed in those concerts, but unfortunately, Palani Anna could not attend my concerts due to some reason. But he made me stay for one more day and asked me to perform again the next day. Palani listened to my concert and was overjoyed. He wholeheartedly blessed me and wished me well. After this, he developed tenderness towards me and respect for my art.

He found my playing special and he liked my special skills to articulate Layam. He wanted me to perform with senior musicians. He arranged many concerts for me by talking to organisers. Not just me, but Palani Anna has supported and blessed many a young artiste besides me. It is my duty to remember him having attained this stature and doing well in the music field.



22 year old Lalgudi Jayaraman accompanying Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer for Simhanandana Tala Demonstration at The Madras Music Academy with Palani Subramania Pillai on Mridangam (A file photo of 25 December 1952)

He has also helped me on the stage when we were accompanying senior artistes by playing very supportingly during my turn. During those days, the artistes I performed within concerts were one generation above me. However, Palani ensured, by means of his supportive playing and encouraging nature, that this generation gap never robbed me of any space required to perform at my best. I have performed in many a concert along with him at the Malaikottai Nootrukkaal Mandapam. I have played along with him for Alathur Brothers on innumerable occasions. Similarly, we have played together for GNB, MMI and other major Vidwans. Also, I have played with Palghat Mani Iyer on Mridangam and Palani Subramania Pillai on Kanjira for Alathur Brothers, Ariyakudi, Madurai Mani Iyer, etc.

After we relocated to Chennai, whenever the organisers came to his house to fix up concerts, he would bring them to my house at Saidapet in his car and fixed me up also. He was a true artist with a big heart.

He was devoted and dedicated to his art. He used to carefully maintain and tune up his mridangam on his concert day and spend hours together before a concert. He always played for

‘Athma Tripti’ (self-satisfaction) in concerts and played to perfection. He never played just to satisfy the audience. He maintained ‘TRUTH’ and ‘INTEGRITY’ in all his life. His playing for kriti was especially beautiful. His playing always enriched the main music through appropriate nadais, sollus and sollukattus. He was equally matching our implementation of kanakku (arithmetics). His playing for Swaram and Nerval was a rare beauty in itself. His Mridangam used to change to tabla during the light items that followed the main Pallavi sequence and he used to excel in playing gumuki. He had a natural flair for gumuki and his right hand that produced the gumuki sounded extraordinarily beautiful. Madurai Mani Iyer and GNB always used to enjoy his playing. Madurai Mani Iyer used to reminisce those gumukis even after the concert for a long time. GNB used to look upon him with friendship and respect and enjoy his mridangam thoroughly. Alathur brothers treated him as though he was their own brother and a family member.

Whenever Palani Subramania Pillai played a concert, the stage used to attain ‘GOWRAVAM’ (respect). He used to command respect by his very presence on the stage. I was fortunate to

travel a lot with him, perform a lot with him and interact a lot with him on musical matters. He was a true artist.

He never used to talk about himself but his earlier generation especially Dakshinamurthy Pillai and his father Muthaiah Pillai and he was humble to the core. He would always do his best as an accompanist irrespective of the artist being senior or junior. Madurai Mani Iyer used to call him a 'Thyagi, meaning he will bring out the best sustenance to the concert and he would not show his dominance.

Generally, a mridangam artist has to know the nuances of melodic music for the concert to succeed. I have heard Palani Anna sing very well be it during our travel or at his house. He used to speak a lot about Malaikottai Panchapakesa Pillai, the eminent Taval Vidwan. He used to admire the way Panchapakesa Pillai played Taval or sang. It was he who created the chetteswaram for 'Niravadi Sukhada' in Ravichandrika now played by TN Rajarathnam Pillai and others. Because of the vast knowledge of vocal music, as a rasika, he enjoyed and appreciated vocal and instrumental music and I have seen him with tears whenever the vocal or violin excelled on the stage.

He had great respect for TN Rajarathnam Pillai and the respect was mutual. There used to be concerts with Alathur Brothers or Madurai Mani Iyer between 4 to 9 pm and then the TN Rajarathnam Pillai concert would start immediately after that. Palani Anna would invariably finish his dinner and be at the TN Rajarathnam Pillai concert and return only after the concert.

He always used to wear a white dress and he was neatness personified. He had a high-class taste in everything. He exhibited general goodwill towards everybody and especially if those people had vidhwat. His Guru Bhakti was of the highest order. He had great taste in all things concerning his daily life, whether it was his dress, the food, or the upkeep of his car.

It goes without saying that his playing was very special by itself. I heard his playing when I was a boy and used to relish the sweetness of his

mridangam. He was a great friend of my father. He used to come to our house frequently and they used to discuss about vidwans for hours together on how they used to sing etc. All though he was a reserved person he used to be very friendly with musicians of younger generations and used to give his best in their concert.

He used to accept to perform with only those artists who were deserving and never bothered about the 'Rate' (remuneration). He treated me like a family member. I played for a concert with Madurai Mani Iyer and Palghat Mani Iyer for the Gruhapravesham of his new house in Venkatnarayana Road, T Nagar. Similarly, for any concerts arranged within his family, he used to engage me as a solo violin artist.

He would bring up Dakshinamurthy Pillai every now and then and would demonstrate how he would play on Kanjira. He was a very spiritual person and would visit 'sages' at every opportunity and I have accompanied him on quite a few occasions. Sometimes he would take his car and go miles to have the darshan of a particular Sage. After the concert, we used to go to Palani temple and he would sing Thirupugazh. I am grateful to have been with him and for all these opportunities.

He used to protect me many a time when there were adverse remarks by someone out of jealousy. He would tell others 'Show me if there is another youngster who is as worthy as Jayaraman' and he would argue with organisers that if they wanted him to play mridangam, Lalgudi Jayaraman should be the violinist in the concert. I always remember him with gratitude for the interest he took in me.

Palani Subramania Pillai has played for you and your sister Srimathy Brahmanandam. What are your experiences?

I started playing Solo in 1958 and many times Srimathy and I used to play duets. In those days Maha Vidwans did not consider playing for the lady artists. His friendship and his large heart towards me made him play for me and Srimathi. It was on 17 May 1958 when he accepted a Sabha in Saidapet for which Madurai Ghatam



File photo of 1961 at Sri Krishna Gana Sabha - Lalgudi Jayaraman and Srimathi Brahmanandam being accompanied by Palani Subramania Pillai and Trichy Sankaran on Mridangam. AV Raghuprasad disciple of Palani Subramania Pillai on Tambura.

Mani Iyer, a disciple of Pudukkottai Manpoondia Pillai and Palani Muthiah Pillai (father of Palani Subramania Pillai) played Ghatam. Incidentally, Madurai Ghatam Mani Iyer had a lot of love and affection for the young child Palani whom he used to carry on his shoulders. Later he used to play with Palani in many solo concerts of mine. These concerts gave me a thrilling experience performing alongside a Maha Vidwan and I learned how a soothing mridangam can enrich and uplift the concert. These concerts are still in my memory. Subsequently, there were similar concerts in Thiruvallikeni Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, Kodambakkam Sangeetha Sabha, and Mylapore Fine Arts.

Incidentally, there was a concert in Tiruchi Nootrukkal Mandapam (RR Sabha) with Palani Anna and Alangudi Ramachandran on Ghatam. This concert was special to me because I had heard many a stalwart at this venue as a boy traveling all the way from Lalgudi. In all my life, It was a thrilling and memorable experience for me performing at this venue in front of a large gathering along with Maha Vidwan Palani Subramania Pillai. One has to play alongside him to really experience his accompaniment. Since he had a vast knowledge of vocal music, his playing

gelled very well with my playing. He was always involved and enjoyed my violin concerts. The mridangam was never separate but became part of the music.

Palani Subramania Pillai Anna and Trichy Sankaran have played double mridangam for your concert. Please tell us that experience

Sri Krishna Gana Sabha felicitated me for having played 50 solo concerts in 25 years. The very first concert of this series was held in 1961 when Palani Subramania Pillai accompanied me along with Trichy Sankaran. It was for the first time that Trichy Sankaran joined his Guru for a double mridangam concert. The concert that was launched by Palani Subramania Pillai in 1961 successfully completed 50 concerts and we celebrated the Golden Jubilee. I consider Palani Anna brought me good fortune and blessings.

Only a renowned mridangam artist will have the ability to receive, understand, and give it back with enrichment our musical thoughts of the Vocal/Violin music. In a concert, when you have such accompaniment, our creativity and ideas get a boost and we excel many folds.

Can you recount a special concert with Palani Subramania Pillai?

Yes, it was a concert with Alathur Brothers and Palani Subramania Pillai at Ponmalai. One Shri. Swaminathan used to hold music concerts on the occasion of Radha Kalyanam and I had taken part in the festival on several occasions. However, for the first time, I was teamed up with Alathur Brothers (at the behest of Palani Anna) and this concert took place on 02 Jan 1950. Alathur Brothers sang an elaborate Vachaspathi and followed it by a Kanda Nadai Pallavi in 5 kalai. I had never heard this Pallavi before and it was a complicated one. They did a Trikalam and then as per custom, looked at the mridangist Palani Anna to play the trikalam (and play the

Mohra and Korvai). However, I also took the bow and laid it across the strings. While the Alathur Brothers' disposition on stage suggested that they were unsure if I could play the trikalam, Palani gently signalled to the brothers that I could measure up to the challenge. I replayed the trikalam perfectly to the astonishment of Alathur Brothers. They appreciated it with a 'sabash'. Since then, Brothers developed a special affection for me and I played for a large number of concerts for them after that. I am grateful to Palani Anna for that singular gesture of his which enhanced my confidence and one that brought forth the appreciation of the Alathur Brothers.

55th Nadajyothi Sangeetha Sambhrama - 2020

55th Nadajyothi Sangeetha Sambhrama - 2020 was held on 9th February at Malleshwaram Sri Rama Mandira and Life time achievement award was presented to Neela Ramgopal and Kalajyothi Award to Dr. Pustakam Rama and Dr. Geetha Bhat. The chief guests of the function were KVR Tagore, Former DGP and TN Sreenivasa Murthy, Famous T.V. and Cine Artist and GV Krishna Prasad. The Office bearers of the Nadajyothi Sangeetha Sabha Trust are also seen in the picture.



Pierian from Lalgudi



CP Chikkanna, Bangalore

The contribution of river Cauvery to Indian arts and culture is immeasurable. Many music composers including the Trinities of Carnatic music, instrumentalists, Vedic and Sanskrit scholars, poets, literary Laureates, sculptures etc. hailing from places in the Cauvery basin have created history by their contributions. Many Violinists like Thirukodikaval Krishna Iyer, Malaikottai Govindaswamy Pillai, Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai, Mysore T Chowdaiah, Karur Papa Venkataramaiah, Lalgudi Rama Iyer and his descendants etc have all played important role in elevating the status of violin in

South India. Belonging to this category is the Trimurtis of violin, TN Krishnan, Lalgudi Jayaraman and MS Gopalakrishnan who excelled as outstanding players both as accompanists and soloists, exploring the high potential of this instrument.

Lalgudi Jayaraman excelled in multiple areas as a Violinist of international fame, an innovator, an highly erudite scholar, a researcher, an eminent Guru, an outstanding composer and a very nice person. He was born on 17-9-1930 to violinist Lalgudi VR Gopala Iyer and Sharada in a village

Five Generations of the Lalgudi family : Left to Right Lalgudi Jayaraman, Lalgudi Rama Iyer (Photograph), Valadi Radhakrishna Iyer (Photograph), VR Gopala Iyer and Lalgudi GJR Krishnan



Edayathumangalam. His great grand father Lalgudi Rama Iyer was a vocalist and direct disciple of Saint Thyagaraja who visited his house on his sojourn to Srirangam and composed the famous Lalgudi Pancharathnas. It was Jayaraman who popularised these songs with great labour and efforts. Lalgudi Rama Iyer migrated to Mysore and was an Asthana vidwan of Maharaja Mummadi Krishna Raja Wadiyar. His son Lalgudi Radhakrishna Iyer settled down at Valadi near Tiruchirapalli and a contemporary of Thirukodikaval Krishna Iyer. He accompanied Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Madurai Pushpavanam Iyer etc. His son is Lalgudi VR Gopala Iyer.

VR Gopala Iyer was a strict disciplinarian and a tough task master. He ensured that his son got up early in the morning around 4 am and practice vocal exercises. After school time, he was not allowed to play outside with his neighbouring children and practicing his father's music lessons was his recreation. He was to practice all the saralai and janti varisais in all the major and minor ragas. A time table of various songs to practice from Monday to Sunday was in place! All the teachings should be absorbed and internalised and no notation of songs were encouraged by his father. Perhaps, it must be this arduous and rigorous training that have played an important role in the career of Jayaraman.

Before switching over to violin, VR Gopala Iyer accompanied his son's vocal recitals in many concerts and after being satisfied, he started teaching his son violin. He advised Jayaraman to record in a note book all that he presented in his concerts, the audience's reaction, his mistakes etc. for a self review at home to be corrected by the father. He took his son to listen to concerts of Mazhavarayandal Subbarama Dikshitar hailed as "musicians's musician", Alathur Brothers, Tiger Varadachariar, Mahara-japuram Viswanatha Iyer etc. at Nootrukall Mandapam in Rockfort Temple at Tiruchirapalli. These concerts deeply influenced Lalgudi Jayaraman.

Therazhundur Srinivasachariar arranged Thyagaraja festival in Tiruchirapalli in which Tiger Varadachariar participated. Tiger asked young

Jayaraman to play the raga Bhairavi followed by the song '*Kolyvaiunnade*'. When it was finished, he was asked to play the neraval at "*manasu ranjilla*". After one or two avarthanams were played, Tiger corrected him and began to sing extempore for over an hour to the joy of all. It was such listening that enriches our knowledge and not tape recorded music opined Jayaraman.

In 1979, we arranged a felicitation function to Jayaraman at Bangalore's Institution of Engineers auditorium. As a part of it, I presented a writeup on him in Kannada Prabha daily (weekly magazine section) edition published from Bangalore. It was an unforgettable interactions with him that is deeply etched in my memory. During our conversations, he recounted many important events, interesting incidents and rich experiences, several anecdotes etc. His mind worked like a computer with precise dates and he was an encyclopaedia. He always believed in talking less, working more concept. Although he appeared very reserved outside, he freely moved with his close acquaintances and friends. Hearing his views and comments were as pleasant and lovely as his violin recitals. When asked about this, he quoted the phrase "*Hitavu matal-entho*" from Thyagaraja's song "*Sarasa Saamad-hana*" and stressed the importance of musicians to maintain their popularity and audience's deep respects.

Jayaraman made his debut in Carnatic music at the age of 12 to accompany Sattur AG Subramanyam at Sapta Rishishwarar Swami Temple. Later he played for TK Rangachari and SV Parthasarathy and others. In a Thyagaraja festival concert at Devakotta by Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, violinist Papa Venkataramaiah could not come. It was then that Iyengar asked young Jayaraman to accompany him.

He made his entry into Madras in the year 1946 to accompany Kumbakonam Sadagopalachariar, disciple of Rajamanickam Pillai in the precincts of Shiva Vishnu Temple at Mambalam. He gave his maiden violin accompaniment at Madras Music Academy in 1948 in the afternoon 3.30pm slot to Palghat KV Narayanaswamy's



The famed Violin-Venu-Veena trio - From Left to Right: Umayalpuram K Sivaraman, N Ramani, Lalgudi Jayaraman, Trivandrum R Venkataraman, TK Murthy (A file photo of 1967)

vocal recital in the presence of top performers Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Alathur Brothers, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Mysore T Chowdaiah, GN Balasubramanyam etc. all seated in front row.

He evolved his own style of precise vocal production of songs on the violin known as 'Lalgudi bani'. The lyrics of every song, its meaning, bhava etc. were deeply studied and memorised by practicing them several times with embellishments to precisely present with utmost perfection in concerts. His selection of sangatis at appropriate phrases with rich raga bhava gives a thrilling experience to listeners. In this context, I have enjoyed his presentation of the song "Marugelara O Raghava" by Thyagaraja in the raga Jayanthasri in which he had woven many beautiful soul stirring cascading sangatis to the pallavi in an ascending order before moving on to anu pallavi.

GN Balasubramanyam and Palghat Mani Iyer deeply influenced him and contributed to a large extent to his immense popularity which he always recalls. Regular feedbacks from seniors, friends and close circles shaped his glorious career. After listening to his exploration of Thodi Raga, Nagaswaram virtuoso TN Rajarathnam Pillai expressed his joy with a huge hug. He created records after records both as an accompanist and a solo player. His concerts were always well planned depending upon the occasion like sabhas, Temple festivals, private func-

tions etc. to the joy of listeners. He never experimented on the stage inviting problems and embarrassments. While accompanying, he never over took the main performers enthusing them and carried the concert to higher elevation. He believed in team work. In mid 1960's, he formed Violin-Venu-Veena (VVV) Trio ensemble with flute N Ramani and Trivandrum R Venkataraman's Veena with Palghat Mani Iyer's mridangam accompaniment. This novel combination was well received by audience throughout the country and laid a solid foundation to set his feet deep in Carnatic music arena to flute Ramani who until then was almost like a stranger emerging from exile. This team later disintegrated into Oblivion.

Jayaraman excelled in lecture demonstrations of important topics related to Carnatic music. In 1979, I was privileged to attend his lecture demonstration under the aegis of Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras at Vani Mahal about the evolution of violin and its importance in music throughout the globe in fluent English. He traced the origin of violin from the simple eka tara instrument consisting of a bamboo stick of one arm length to which a covered coconut shell is fixed with a bridge to support a steel alloy string and a key to adjust the tension. It is played using a bow. Such a stone sculpture could be seen in ancient Hindu Temples in Mysore region. This instrument had undergone several changes/improvements over period of time and reached the present stage. He demon-

strated the various parts, their importance, how the timbre from European countries have a better tonal quality over native wood, the care to be taken in maintaining the instrument etc. .

The credit for popularising the nearly extinct Tillana of Maharaja Swathi Thirunal in the raga Dhanashri should go to Jayaraman. He participated in numerous Jugal Bandhi concerts with a number of Hindustani instrumentalists throughout the country and in several countries abroad. He was a great fan of ghazals, jazz and western classical music and adopted some of their beauties in his solo recitals. He ensured that his children gained adequate stage experience by participating in his solo recitals before they started accompanying. Due to fading health, he retired from the stage and started teaching and composing. His padha varnas, Tana varnas and Tillanas in rare and apoorva ragas were well received by the dancers and musicians. He used many swaraksharas in his compositions. When I inquired the reason for not using any Ankitha, he said that his lyrics and the compositions are his mudhras.

When I sought his advice to young performers with respect to building up a career, he said one should rigorously practice and develop quick absorbing of the main performer's presentation and spontaneous response with perfection and give wholehearted support to carry the concert to greater height. The stage presence/presentation is most important. They should not run after money and recounted an anecdote from his memory. A certain popular Vidwan in Tamil Nadu was in the habit of imposing tough condi-

tions and mentioning the duration of concert. Any extension beyond the agreed duration is subject to proportionate increase in payment. A rich Zamindar in interior Tamil Nadu arranged his concert for his family function. When the concert was into half hour, the Zamindar told the Vidwan that it was enough of him and to pack-up. The advance covered the fee for half hour. The concert continued with a substitute Vidwan to the same accompanists. Hence, it is better that performers maintain good public relations and be accommodative he opined.

His another feather is the number of students he trained among whom many have become top ranking performers. Popular vidhushi Sankari Krishnan, Bombay Jayashri Ramnath, OS Thyagarajan, noted Harikatha exponent Vishaka Hari, her brother Saketha Raman, SP Ramh, Violinists T Rukmini, Pakala Ramdas, Vittal Ramamurthy etc.

He floated Lalgudi trust and was giving scholarships to deserving students being trained by him. He deposited his fees under Central Government scholarship in fixed deposit and after the completion of the duration of scholarship, he returned the FD certificates to the students!

Innumerable awards and rewards were bestowed upon him by Individuals, his fans, organisations and institutions of repute both National and International, various State Governments and Central Governments etc. and the list is long. In the History of Madras Music Academy, perhaps he is the only Carnatic musician to decline the coveted Sangita Kalanidhi honours for

A Jugalbandi concert at Chennai in 1971 - Lalgudi Jayaraman with Ustad Vilayat Khan with Trichy Sankaran on Mridangam and Pt. Samta Prasad on the Tabla





Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman being honoured with 'Lifetime Achievement Award' from The Madras Music Academy. L to R - Chitra Visweswaran, TN Seshagopalan, Chief Guest Gopalakrishna Gandhi (Ex. Governor of West bengal), Academy President N Murali, Lalgudi Jayaraman, RK Srikantan, Guru Karaikudi R Mani, BM Sundaram, musicologist (File photo of 09 March 2008)

the delay in conferring it on him. Later he was conferred the "Lifetime Achievement award" specially instituted by the same organisation. He was the first musician from Tamil Nadu to preside over the annual conference of Bangalore Gayana Samaja and received Sangeetha Kalarathna honours. Noted violinist Yehudi Menuhin presented his violin to Jayaraman during his visit which was reciprocated with a ivory model of violin when Menuhin visited Madras later.

Another feather in the cap of Jayaraman is his single handed efforts in building a Mani Manda-

pam to Sangitha Trimurtis in their birth place at Tiruvarur on the instructions of HH Paramacharya of Kanchipuram. He collected contributions from leading performers, philanthropists and general public and erected a beautiful edifice where a music festival is arranged every year in the month of May.

He was a nature lover and a regular visitor to Nandi Hills 70 kms from Bangalore with his family on holidays. He passed away in 2013 at the age of 82 leaving an ever lasting memory of his contributions to Indian arts and culture.

Pallavi Sammela prize winners



Following are the prize winners in the 'Pallavi Sammela' a Pallavi recitation competition conducted by 'Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira'

I Prize - Eeshwar Aiyer (Bangalore), disciple of Swarnalata Vishwanath and Bangalore S Shankar

II Prize - Abhirama G Bode (Bangalore), Disciple of RA Ramamani

II Prize - R Lakshmipriya (Chennai), Disciple of Akhila Siva and mother-cum-guru Dr. R. Hemalatha

Judges choice special prize - Maduri Kaushik (Bangalore), Disciple of Dr. Sukanya Prabhakar and Ranjani and Gayathri

Legendary Violin Maestro Lalgudi Sri. G Jayaraman



*Mrudanga Vidwan, Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. Trichy Sankaran,
Professor Emeritus, Music Department, York University, Toronto, Canada*

It is my privilege and honour to write about the legendary Violin maestro Padma Vibhushan Lalgudi Sri G. Jayaraman on the occasion of his 90th birth anniversary celebration. Even though he is not with us anymore, he has left behind him a great legacy, a great musical tradition that has been respected, followed and admired for decades by numerous artists and rasikas alike.

Hailing from Saduguru Sri Thyagaraja Swamy's sishya parampara, Lalgudi Sri G. Jayaraman had established his name and fame in the Carnatic music field for well over seven decades. His entire family - his father, sister, and other siblings were all into music in one form or the other. His father and Guru Sri V Gopala Iyer himself was a violin vidwan of repute and a composer of considerable merit.

I have had a long association with Sri Lalgudi Sir, since the time of my debut in the year 1955 in Alathur Brothers' concert in which he performed. I played in tandem with my Guru Maha Vidwan the late Sri Palani Subramania Pillai on that occasion. Sri Palani had a special affinity for Lalgudi and was always in praise of his vidwath. He recommended his name to many vidwans of his time. Both my Guru and I have played in many of Lalgudi's duet concerts when Lalgudi performed with his sister Srimathy for several years. Subsequently I performed with Sri Lalgudi and his sister, and later on when he played with his son and daughter GJR Krishnan and Vijayalakshmi in numerous concerts - for more than five decades on my own. In fact I have performed with them in three of their North American tours in the 80s and the 90s.

I have also shared the stage with Sri Lalgudi over the years accompanying many stalwarts in the field that include Sri Papanasam Sivan, Chembai Vaidhyanatha Bhagavata, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Alathur Brothers, Musiri Subramania Iyer, GN Balasubramaniam, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Madurai Mani Iyer, Dr. Pinakapani, M Balamurali Krishna, Voleti Venkateswarulu, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, KV Narayanaswamy, and numerous others. In every one of these concerts I have admired Lalgudi's adaptability and how he complimented and adorned the music of every artist with his own ingenuity.

Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman was a multifaceted musician, a legend, whose contribution to Carnatic music was unparalleled. His profound musicianship, technical brilliance and mastery over laya – all these aspects had secured him an exalted position in the Carnatic field. His compositional skills were extraordinary. He has given to the Carnatic world numerous Varnams, Kritis, and Thillanas that bear testimony to the brilliant skills and creativity he possessed as a great composer. He had enthralled the audience all over the world with his evocative and lyrical style of violin playing that came to be known as the "Lalgudi Bani".

Sri Lalgudi carved a niche for himself as a supreme concert artist. His role as an accompanying musician, then as a soloist, and further on as a composer - all these can be looked at and analysed from different perspectives.

First of all, he had an expansive concert repertoire of songs which made him the sought after



Lalgudi Jayaraman and GJR Krishnan being accompanied by Trichy Sankaran on Mridangam

violin vidwan/accompanist to a large number of stalwarts for a long time in the music field. It is not only the repertoire but also how he adapted himself to different styles of rendering kritis by different artists. Lalgudi's musical responses and accompanying skills found to be outstanding and in that he had adapted his playing to suit the different styles that helped out the main artist. His ability to reproduce - be it sangatis or svarakalpana, kanakku or svara korvai was extraordinary. His rendering of trikalam in Ragam Tanam Pallavi particularly in Alathur Brothers' concerts deserves a special mention. Here, I fondly recall how brilliantly he handled one of the most difficult Pallavis that was rendered by Alathur Brothers in a concert at the Music Academy (1964) that was in Sankirna nadai in caturasra jathi triputa tala:

"Kadirvadi vela unadhu padham tunaiye| Orarumugane devathi devane"

The interesting fact to note here is how Brothers grouped the Sankirnam in 3 groups of 3, which is different from the norm of 4+5.

On another instance, it was Sri Lalgudi who came up with the idea of performing tisra chatusram i.e. 4 over 3 (some may call this chatusra tisram) in Pallavis (not to be confused with tisra nadai), which apparently he had demonstrated in Alathur's concert earlier - this particular concert happened in Golden Rock, near Tiruchirappalli. This unique concept is being followed

by many musicians of present times. Back in 1952 Sri Lalgudi had accompanied Mudikondan Sri Venkatarama Iyer along with my Guru Sri Palani Sir for a Pallavi in Simhanandana Tala of 128 beats at the Music Academy Madras.

Our Carnatic music is based on textual tradition, which means the lyrics (Saahitya) are given utmost importance. To Lalgudi, whether it is an accompaniment or his own violin solo (duet) recital, Saahityam was most important. In his parampara, it is a must that one learns to sing a kriti before attempting to play it on the instrument and that too with carefully chosen sangatis and step by step development in all three sections namely the pallavi, anupallavi, and charanam. Lalgudi himself was a very good singer and I had the privilege of listening to his vocal concerts (mainly during lec-dems) on several occasions. While understanding and embellishing distinctive features and characteristics of music rendered by different artists, he was strong in establishing his own patantharam of kritis. He has also added many innovative sangatis of his own to many kritis. I recall here for example, how different that was when he rendered the kriti "Paramathmudu" in the raga Vagadeeswari in one of his solo concerts at the Music Academy to which I accompanied in the early 70s.

So, naturally his violin style of playing came to be known as gayaki style as it was essentially

based on vocal rendering. Without going into lot of details, suffice it to state that he adapted finger techniques, even improved and modified so as to give expression to the essential characteristics of Carnatic music. In this respect he always placed technique subservient to musical values. Of course his bowing techniques included what is known as Svara Vil, Ssahitya Vil and Tana Vil and Lalgudi always knew when to use these and in what proportion, and he always cared for overall aesthetics in musical presentations.

Other salient features of his performances include the following: Preparing a concert program of items to be rendered in a concise manner that would reflect contrasting ragas, talas, portraying different moods, and compositions by different composers, including his own varnams and Thillanas. Lalgudi's knowledge and mastery over layam was remarkable, which he has amply demonstrated during accompaniment to stalwarts as well in his own violin solos (duets) concerts. As mentioned earlier, he always excelled in the Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi section showing his extraordinary skills in rendering trikalam of the Pallavis and nadai changes.

His kanakku (rhythmic calculation) particularly in svarakalapana section always had a special feature which can be termed "poruththam" meaning "appropriateness" or alignment and in that, he will always make a connection of the ending to the beginning phrase of the melodic line. He had followed this unique feature for shorter rounds of svaraprastara as well as korvais leading to the eduppu which I refer to as 'andhadhi korvais'. He never indulged in the kanakkus at the detriment of melody. His korvais were always so well knitted and melody-oriented that at times will baffle the mrudangam accompanists.

This feature of poruththam can be seen in many of his Thillanas too. Generally speaking Thillanas are rhythm oriented, but in the case of Lalgudi we come across Thillanas that reflect both lyrical beauty and rhythmic variations in proper proportion. I have particularly enjoyed his thillanas: Behag Thillana in adi tala tisra nadai,

Charukesi, Thilang, Sindhubhairavi, Desh, Pahadi and Revathi among many others. His lilting melodies in the tukkada sections were equally captivating.

Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman's music was steeped in tradition. His music was highly traditional, yet innovative. He was both a lakshana and lakshya vidwan. His imagination in alapanas, swarakalpanas, koraippus and kanakkus in korvais were par excellence - that placed him in a high pedestal - he stood apart from the rest of the violin vidwans in this respect.

His innovation included the three celebrated Vs i.e. Violin-Venu-Veena where he had orchestrated Carnatic music in a beautiful manner within traditional bounds with Mrudangam and other percussions, and not to mention his acclaimed music for dance drama such as "Jaya Jaya Devi". It is well known fact that he had given many jugalbandhi concerts with famous Hindusthani musicians. My first experience in this regard was when I played with Sri Lalgudi and Ustad Vilayat Khan (Sitar) with Pandit Samta Prasad on Tabla in 1971.

In summary, I would say that Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman's music reflected his emphasis on aesthetics, mastery over laya and melody and a systematic approach and logic in the presentation of ragas and svarakalpanas. He was a consummate musician and a prolific composer whose mastery of violin playing continues to be respected throughout the world. He has trained numerous sishyas over the years, and many of them are prominent artists today. His son Lalgudi Sri GJR Krishnan, and daughter Smt. Vijayalakshmi are the torchbearers of this great tradition and they are contributing in their own way to the enrichment of Lalgudi Bani.

Lalgudi debut concert at The Madras Music Academy

Courtesy: The Hindu



It was TR Balu, brother of TR Subramaniam who introduced VR Gopala Iyer and Lalgudi Jayaraman to GNB when they visited his house. Gopala Iyer did all the talking while young Lalgudi Jayaraman stood in aside. They spent some time together and VR Gopala Iyer invited GNB to attend a concert of his son Lalgudi Jayaraman at the next opportunity and GNB promised them that he will be present.

The date was 26 December 1948 and for the first time, Lalgudi Jayaraman was to perform at the Music Academy accompanying KV

Narayanaswamy a disciple of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar. MS Subbaraman was on mridangam. It was an afternoon concert at 3.30 pm and many Vidwans were in attendance curious to know about a young man from Lalgudi playing well. Seated in the front row were GNB, Alathur Brothers, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Chembai, Palani Subramania Pillai, Mysore T Chowdiah. It was a testing performance for Lalgudi Jayaraman. The concert went on for one and a half hours and at the end of it, there was a huge appreciation and loud applause from the audience. The concert was a huge success and people were highly impressed by Lalgudi Jayaraman.

Lalgudi was settling down in the green room after the concert when he felt a tap on his shoulder. To his surprise it was GNB. 'Besha Vasichche pa' (you played very well). GNB appreciated him and patted him on the back and enquired 'Are you free on the Tenth of February?' A wedding concert? Lalgudi Jayaraman said 'yes'.

GNB placed a 10 Rs. note into Lalgudi Jayaraman's pocket and said 'this is all I have now. Treat this money as advance'

He left Lalgudi Jayaraman wondering how a Maha Vidwan who was at his peak can be so humble and simple.

When Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar first heard Jayaraman's performance, he remarked appreciatively that the youngster's music was as melodious as that of his illustrious uncle, Kandasamy Bhagavathar

-Savitri Ammal (wife of VR Gopala Iyer)

Lalgudi Jayaraman the holistic Musician



*Lalgudi GJR Krishnan and Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi as told to S Anand, Bangalore
Prepared based on an interview*

Lalgudi GJR Krishnan and Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi are the torch bearers of the Thyagaraja parampara and the famed Lalgudi Bani. Their forefather Lalgudi Shri Rama Iyer was a direct disciple of Sadguru Thyagaraja. Both were trained by their grandfather VR Gopala Iyer initially and subsequently by father Lalgudi Jayaraman himself. I met with Lalgudi GJR Krishnan and Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi and discussed various aspects relating to Lalgudi Jayaraman's musical journey. Excerpts from our discussions follow;

Lalgudi Jayaraman's Intense practice sessions
It was like going back by five decades for GJR Krishnan on the topic of Lalgudi Jayaraman's



practice sessions. "During the days of Violin, Venu and Veena trio, N Ramani and Trivandrum Venkatraman along with Mridangists at the time, used to practice for hours together in our thatched room situated on the terrace at our house. My mother would fetch food and serve them as they would have no sense of time at all. The practice sessions would go from morning to night."

"During the days of duets with Srimathi, they used to practice for hours together and my grandfather VR Gopala Iyer used to put the talam. I used to join them as a small boy and sit next to my grandfather watching them practice. Ghatam Madurai Mani Iyer, a disciple of Palani Muthaiah Pillai used to join them for practice at times. I have also seen Papanasam Sivan come home and sing his compositions. I have also seen MM Dandapani Desikar's practice with my father. I vividly remember his round 'kumkum' and the kriti 'anai mugattone' in Deva Manohari ragam that he used to sing. This song became a hit with neighbouring kids who used to sing it with their tunes making fun of it at times.

I have seen intense discussions between my father and Calcutta Krishnamurthy Bhagavathar for long hours with no breaks at all. Similarly, Voleti Venkateswarlu used to visit father with Ghazal cassettes sung by Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Mehdi Hassan, Ghulam Ali. etc. The Pahadi Tillana on lord Shiva took its birth inspired by one such context. Similarly, he created a Tillana on Lord Venkateshwara for Nedanuri Garu in ragam Ananda Bairavi. As a rule, he would play his new compositions before his father and get his approval.



Lalgudi Jayaraman and Lalgudi GJR Krishnan performing for Sree Ramaseva Mandali, Fort High School, Chamarajapet, Bangalore with Umayalpuram K Sivaraman on Mridangam and HP Ramachar on Kanjira

GJR Krishnan continues “When I joined my father in 1973, our practice sessions used to be very intense. My father’s eyes used to be very powerful and I considered they were attained through Siddhi in music. We used to have long sessions and he never used to talk and only our violins talked. At times he would give me a new composition to learn within a time frame and get back to me and check how well I have learned. There were innumerable occasions when we practiced Pallavi’s during our train journey.

I remember a concert for Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha in Bombay for which we boarded the train at Chennai and he closed the doors of our first-class coupe immediately after the train departed. We were practicing all the while except for food break till the train reached Dadar. To top it all, we had rehearsal again at my Aunt’s place with Karaikudi Mani Sir and TH Vinayakram Sir.

He kept me on my toes and often used to raise the bar. Looking back, I don’t regret the way I was groomed”.

Saga with Violins

It is indeed a very interesting story about how various Violins have found their way into Lalgudi household. GJR Krishnan says “in those days,

Zamindars, ICS officers who traveled to Europe and England, would bring Violins and present it to my forefathers. There is a case of a Violin being presented to Lalgudi Kandaswamy Bhagavathar (VR Gopala Iyer’s elder brother) and a letter reflecting the same is a testimony. When the Britishers left the country, the Anglo Indians in the Purasaiwakkam area left some of the Violins used in Churches. My uncle Ananthagopalan (Lalgudi’s sister Padmavathy’s husband), a violinist himself, lived in Purasaiwakkam area. He used to refer to any good instruments he came across, to my father. Thiruvallur Subramaniam who used to play for MLV gave some Violins.”

GJR narrates an interesting story. “My father’s Violin required a Sound Post adjustment. A tool is inserted through the f-hole to move and adjust the Sound Post. One should use an appropriate tool and also possess adequate skills to be able to adjust the Sound Post. However, during the process, the f-hole broke, leaving my father shattered. In the end, it was fixed with Vajram (A kind of glue to fix wood) but the original tonal quality was lost. Repairing a Violin was a challenging affair in those days and many would keep the violin aside if there were to be a problem”.

GJR Continues “When my father travelled to the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland in



Lalgudi Jayaraman accompanying Alathur Brothers, Sivasubramania Iyer and Srinivasa Iyer with Palghat Mani Iyer on mridangam (1965 file photo of a home concert)

1965 along with KV Narayanaswamy and Palghat Mani Iyer, he carried with him Papa KS Venkataramaiah's violin and got it repaired at WE Hills and Sons in London. In recent times, the local craftsmen possess better skills, tools and employ a workbench comparable to western standards. Violin Wise a program initiated by Lalgudi Trust to bring an expert technician from the USA to train the local craftsmen has helped the cause".

The famed Sankeerna Nadai Pallavi of Alathur Brothers

It was the year 1964 when Sivasubramania Iyer (of Alathur Brothers) presided over the Madras Music Academy conference and was to be conferred the prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi.

Brothers rehearsed a sankeerna nadai Pallavi (Adi Talam with each beat comprising of 9 constituent units) with Palghat Mani Iyer days before the concert. When Mani Iyer informed them to discuss the Pallavi with Lalgudi, they brushed aside the suggestion, saying 'Not necessary, Jayaraman will handle it'.

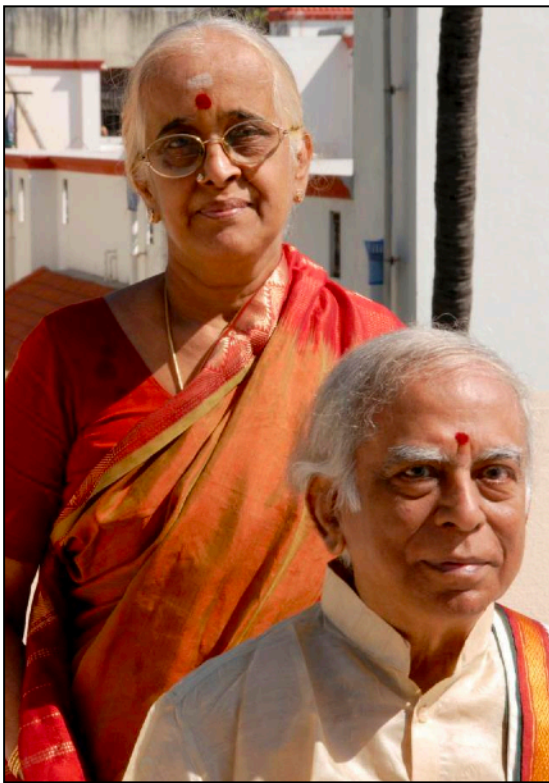
The day was 23 December 1964 and the Music Academy hall was overflowing. The team consisted of Alathur Brothers, Lalgudi Jayaraman, Palghat Mani Iyer and Pudukkottai Swaminatha Pillai (son of the legendary Pudukkottai Dakshinamurthy Pillai) on Kanjira. Alathur Brothers

presented the now-famous pallavi '*kadir vadivela unadu padam tunaiye*' that Lalgudi encountered for the very first time on stage. He handled the challenging pallavi with ease and aplomb. The audience were in raptures and the hall was reverberating with applause. After the concert, profusely sweating Sivasubramania Iyer hugged Lalgudi Jayaraman with joy and said '*singa kutti da ni*' (you are a lion cub).

Lalgudi GJR Krishnan unfolds this further "decades later maybe in the '90s, an official of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha remembering the sankeerna nadai pallavi concert remarked in front of my father that Alathur Brothers prostrated in front of him after the concert. However, my father, a stickler to the truth, negated the statement and factually recounted what happened".

Generous and value-driven to the core

Lalgudi GJR Krishnan says, "my father was very generous and he never charged students for teaching. One such beneficiary was a current-day distinguished musician for whom he taught music free for several years and long hours. When she was honoured by Karthik Fine arts with 'Isai Peroli' title, she brought home 15,000 Rs. that came with the award and gave it to my father as a humble offering. However, my father deposited the same money in Sriram Finance and returned it to her after the due maturity.



Rajalakshmi with Lalgudi Jayaraman

One should see the passion and joy of his teaching during his classes to believe it. Nothing was hidden and he would teach with an open heart”.

Recording challenges of yesteryears

HMV Studios did not have the ideal settings in those days. They would close all the doors when the recording started and as a result, the ventilation was poor. One would profusely sweat during the recording and to make matters worse, there was NO punching. If there were to be a refinement needed, the music had to be repeated and recorded all over again. This is the condition in which the ‘Dance of Sound’ Tillanas (1977) was recorded painstakingly.

Lalgudi GJR Krishnan narrates an incident “I remember a recording along with Vellore Ramabhadran where we carried bedsheets from our house. My father would personally supervise the bedsheets to be put in the appropriate places in the studio to dampen the reverbera-

tions during recording. He would remove his shirt and play with just his banyan due to intense heat and sweating. For him, nothing mattered other than his sublime music at its best.

His sense of kalapramanam was extraordinary. It was one of those recordings where Raja, son of S Ramanathan was recording ‘*entha muddo*’ in Bindu Malini. The first take took 4 min and 24 Sec. They wanted to do another take and to everybody’s surprise the second recording came out to be exactly 4 min and 24 Sec”.

Aesthetics and Dignity in whatever he did

Usually, a vocalist would make a kriti popular and the instrumentalists would play that considering it is a popular kriti. But, in the case of Lalgudi Jayaraman, it was an exception and vocalists performed kritis popularised by him.

GJR recollects how TRS complimented the rendition and setting of ‘*Sri Raama Paadamaa*’ in raga Amritavaahini that was played by Lalgudi at the IIT Delhi concert. TRS added that while he was not particularly inclined to handle this kriti earlier, he was now inspired to render this kriti in the future.

Though my father imbibed kritis from people like Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, he always gave his individual touch maintaining the intentions and spirit of the compositions”.

As the famous saying goes ‘Nothing in music was untouched by him and nothing he touched was left unimproved’.

Rajalakshmi (Rajamma)

Lalgudi Jayaraman’s wife Rajamma was born on 07 January 1939 in Rangoon, Burma where her father worked for Burma Railways. She was brought up in various places after her family was relocated to India. They were a big family with three sisters and four brothers and a family very different from the Lalgudi Jayaraman’s which was very orthodox and disciplined.

She was learning music from Salem Desikan for whom Lalgudi Jayaraman accompanied in many concerts. It was Salem Desikan who moved the marriage proposal with VR Gopala Iyer and their horoscope matched.



Lalgudi Jayaraman, Lalgudi GJR Krishnan, Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi being accompanied by Guru Karaikudi Mani (A file photo of 05 November 1995 at The Wallace Theatre, University of Sydney, Australia, presented by Pallavi, Sydney, Australia)

Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi says “It is very difficult to come across a lady like my mother. She was the best thing to have happened to Appa after my Thata who always dreamt of seeing Appa turn in to a musical genius. Amma played a key role through her immense support to achieve that dream. She completely changed herself after marriage and adjusted to our family lifestyle. She excelled through her compassion and never carried a bitter feeling. She matched my father in having a sharp memory and excellent retention. She was a motherly figure to all of Appa’s disciples and many times used to keep the food ready for the students and served them after the class. She was always there to provide medical, investment advice and would reach out to the students when in need.

She was a combination of various exalting qualities and became a binding force to bring all our relatives together and won everybody’s heart. She was a great host and took care of attending phone calls, managing guests and visitors, every support that was needed for Appa. There were occasions when Appa would reach Central station and within an hour board another train at Egmore station and she was ready with all necessary support including lunch for Appa’s full team sent to them at the station.

It was due to my mother that Appa could fully focus on his music without having to bother about anything else. During my grandfather’s last days, he used to call out Amma often and

breathed his last uttering her name ‘Rajamma’. She was the iron lady who carried a very positive mindset providing physical and emotional support to Appa when he was sick during his later years”.

God created a complete ecosystem

The story of Lalgudi Jayaraman resembles that of epic Ramayana. Lalgudi had a Vishwamitra and Dasharatha in his father VR Gopala Iyer, Seetha in his wife Rajamma, etc. and everybody played a role to support Lalgudi Jayaraman’s ‘avatharam’. Vijayalakshmi says “It is as though there was a divine intervention that designed everything”

Violin Trio

The Trio concerts were an evolution of the Violin duets concerts. GJR Krishnan was hardly 13 (1973) when he started supporting Lalgudi Jayaraman after Srimathi Brahmanandam could not continue her duets. Vijayalakshmi joined him occasionally whenever GJR Krishnan had exams. The Trio concert took its birth due to requests from Sabhas. These concerts were fully outlined by Lalgudi Jayaraman and at times rehearsed also.

The main ragam elaboration was always by Lalgudi GJR Krishnan. In playing the main Keerthana, two violins will be in lower octaves and one will be in the higher octave. One of the ragam in the concert will be developed phase by phase by all the three. There will be a Pallavi and a Ragamalika swaram with three violins

playing in tandem with scope for swarams to be played at octaves to bring out the contrast. Where to play soft (mellinum) and hard (vallinam) would be planned. Selection of kriti and raga was not driven by Prati madhyamam and Sudda Madhyamam set alone or rakti raga. Consideration was given to bring the right contrast as well as meeting the occasion and catering to the tastes of the cross-sections of the rasikas. Lalgudi Jayaraman made sure each one contributed to the concert equally and recognised equally.

The idea was to deliver the best tonal quality as the melody was supreme. Lalgudi Jayaraman was not just a musician but his brain worked like that of a Sound Engineer. Acoustics planning was considered paramount to the success of a concert. As Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi says “he crossed the realms of Karnatic music and achieved the sound effects that would be synonymous with symphony orchestra”

Accompanying Techniques and skills

Accompanying the main artiste is not merely to reproduce the layam or the arithmetics, but it is about understanding and connecting with the main artist's mindset and emotions. The ragam essays are a faithful reproduction of what the main artiste sketched with appropriate emphasis. While there are patantharam challenges, Lalgudi bani helps in being flexible and adaptable. Lalgudi Jayaraman was always in tune with GNB or Ariyakudi or for that matter Semmanugudi who all exhibited different styles.

A perfect example is a concert where Lalgudi Jayaraman accompanied Voleti Venkateswarlu. Influenced and inspired by Hindustani music, Voleti brings in a lot of Hindustani flourishes in the Pahadi Tillana composed by Lalgudi Jayaraman. Lalgudi Jayaraman in turn faithfully reproduces the same as though the composition belonged to Voleti like a faithful follower.

Lalgudi bani creates a beautiful effect in returning short raga essays during Viruttam etc. bringing out the soul of the ragam inspiring the main artiste as well as making a strong impact on the audience.

Lalgudi Pada Varnams DVD

Four Gems of Lalgudi Jayaraman's Pada Varnams (Charukesi, Nilambari, Shanmukhapriya, Navarasa Ragamalika) have been documented and released in a DVD format (March 2009). It contains interactive teachings by Lalgudi GJR Krishnan and Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi and enables dancers and vocalists to have a first-hand experience of learning from the Lalgudi school of music.

Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi says, “ML Vasanthakumari, Maharajapuram Santanam often used to request my father for Varnams and Tillana and invariably I would sing and my brother would play on Violin to meet the requests. Swathi's Sanskriti approached us to help make a DVD series intended to document the invaluable treasure of my father's compositions for posterity. The dancers, especially tend to benefit from the DVD due to visual media and well-explained lyrics. It is set in a classroom-like environment and I teach the students. The vocalisation is by the students and my brother and I play the Varnams on the Violin”.

Jaya Jaya Devi

“Jaya Jaya Devi” is a ballet in Bharatanatyam style on the theme of different aspects of Goddess (Devi), for which Lalgudi Jayaraman composed the lyrics and music, Srimathi Rhadha scored the choreography, and Sujatha Vijayaraghavan did the research and also anchored the project. It was premiered in 1994 in the USA during the Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana. Subsequently, it was staged in about 30 other cities in the USA and was a resounding success. This is yet another project where the creativity and genius of Lalgudi Jayaraman were in full flow and the event in the USA is still considered one of the best shows.

SP Ramh, a senior disciple of Lalgudi Jayaraman should be credited with supporting and notating the compositions on the fly and also supporting the Vocals during the show. Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi recounts “SP Ramh would come home every day at 7.30 am after coffee and Appa and he would lock themselves up in a room on the Terrace (motte maadi) and spend hours together.

Each composition was developed by continuous refinement, notated, and renderings recorded before it was finalised. Simultaneously the dance for the composition was also rehearsed by Sri-mathi Rhadha”.

Jaya Jaya Devi has six episodes (Dakshaayani, Uma Parinayam, Ardhanaari, Karumaari, and Parvathi Laasyam) each depicting the different incarnations of the Devi. There are many ‘FIRSTS’ in these compositions which never existed before. While Keeravani Varnam is composed in the form of dialog (question and answer), the Uma Parinayam dance composition is based on ‘Thanam’ in Vasantha and the beautiful Sindhu Bhairavi of Durga has a Jathiswaram incorporating ‘Sruti Bedam’ perfectly synchronising with the choreography.

Lalgudi Jayaraman the perfectionist

Tamil film ‘Srīgaram’ directed by Sarada Ramanathan in 2007 has the unique distinction of having its music composed by Lalgudi Jayaraman for which he won the national award. A day before it was to be released, Sarada Ramanathan realised that the title music for the film was not incorporated though they had completed the title screen. Upon hearing, Lalgudi Jayaraman completed conceptualisation of the same during lunch break and the music was set perfectly in ragam Bilahari in one attempt that exactly matched the time window to the last second the same day.

A request for a Pada Varnam on Lord Venkateshwara came from a noted Bharatha Natyam dancer Chitra Visweswaran. The next day morning Lalgudi Jayaraman went for a darshan of Lord Venkateshwara at TTD Devasthanam in T Nagar and completed the varnam in 5 days.

Lalgudi Trust

Lalgudi Trust was formed considering the best utilisation of the 1000 Rs. per month stipend Lalgudi Jayaraman was granted by the Govt. of Tamil Nadu when he was bestowed with the Tamil Nadu state award in 1979. Today it is a charitable trust. The objective of the Trust is to provide support and encouragement, especially

to the young talent. Trust has endowments with the Sabhas for sponsoring prizes for musical performance. Lalgudi Trust has provided scholarships for the needy, gifted musical instruments to deserving and aspiring students. Vid. Vittal Ramamurthy has been a beneficiary when he was gifted a Violin by the Trust in his younger days.

Lalgudi Trust has been conducting “Violin Wise”, a unique and first-of-its-kind workshop in the history of Carnatic Music since 2013. This workshop is held over two weeks period in Chennai and brings together local violin craftsmen with one of the foremost western Luthiers. Under the auspices of this workshop, Mr. James Wimmer, a passionate and expert Luthier from Santa Barbara, is brought to Chennai to impart his knowledge and skills to the local craftsmen free of cost. Besides, the trust sponsors specialised tools as well as a stipend for the craftsmen who are chosen to attend the workshop. Through this initiative, and the ongoing work of the graduates of this workshop, Lalgudi

Mr. James Wimmer training a local Violin craftsman



Trust is helping to raise the quality of instrument care for string instruments all over India.

The Trust, together with Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi's Krutagnya Trust, conducts an annual event known as "Violin Vaibhavam", hosting solo and duet performances by young violinists from different schools.

The Trust has plans to document and disseminate Lalgudi's compositions similar to Pada Var-nam DVD effort. There is a plan to conduct workshops and educate the deserving students on Lalgudi Pancharatna kritis.

The Trust has grown steadily from strength to strength over the years. Since the passing of

Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman in 2013, the Trust has been under the stewardship of Shri Lalgudi GJR Krishnan.

Thanks to GJR Krishnan and Vijayalakshmi, Lalgudi Jayaraman's singing violin continues to sing and enthrall the people world over. Considering the large number of students they are training, the tradition, legacy and the bani are all in safe hands and the baton will be passed on to the next generation.

The famed Lalgudi Bani

Courtesy - <https://lalgudivijayalakshmi.com/>

A style founded and evolved by Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman, the 'Lalgudi Bani' (bani is the vernacular word for style) is a creation of the maestro's genius. It is a bani, where music takes the forefront, and technique is viewed only as a means of projecting and expressing the melody. The bani aspires to make the violin sing, and this is the focal point around which it has evolved. The bani is a blend of melody and rhythm - each complementing the other; and where rhythm, however fascinating, bows down necessarily to melody.

In the interpretations of ragas, the bani prides itself on revealing the identities of the melodic forms in the shortest possible time. Therefore, the expanse of a raga is only dictated by other factors in play. In the rendition of a kriti, the Lalgudi bani encapsulates the spirit of the composer, and brings to life the meaning of the lyrics.

This approach naturally necessitates the optimum choice of tempo, gamakas, and related musical nuances. Contained in this effort, are also lofty values that include bhakti towards music, the composer, the guru, and the Almighty.

The bani's impact on the presentation of kalpana swaras is distinct and varied. Its hallmark is the dovetailing of the swaras with the eduppu, wherein, the last few swaras neatly fit in with the swaras that make up the chosen theme line. A study of this captivating bani reveals the effort that has gone into its creation.

The bani is mesmerising, displaying Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman's aptitude for research, his love for tradition, his urge to innovate, his quest for perfection, and his keen eye for aesthetics, while retaining the values.



Sangeetha Sambrama

Rajashree Yoganand, Bangalore

Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira started the new year 2020 hosting almost a month long music festival. It was an amalgamation of seasoned artistes along with the young brigade coming together in this music festival. The concert series started with Vid. Pantula Rama inaugurating it with her soulful singing and concluded with aplomb with the concert of Vid. N Vijay Shiva. "Sangita Vedantha Dhureena" the award constituted in the name of the visionary founder G. Vedantha Iyengar was given this year to the well known musicians Malladi brothers, Vid. Ravi Kumar and Vid. Sreeramprasad. The award constituted a cash purse of one lakh rupees each, a silver medal and a citation followed by their robust singing, enthralling the rasikas with their selection of kritis and rendition. The highlight of their concert was that they were accompanied by the foremost virtuoso of mridangam, Sangita Kalanidhi Trichy Sankaran.

Another legend of mridangam playing, Umayalpuram K Sivaraman accompanied the violin duo Mysore M Nagaraj and Dr. M Manjunath. Age belied his mridangam playing (84 years) as he can match artistes younger to him with his energy and enthusiasm. He was felicitated by former chief minister of Karnataka, Sri SM Krishna, who is a great aficionado of music and had graced the hall with his presence and was seen enjoying the concert.

The rasikas also had the pleasure to listen to another great percussionist Vidwan Yella Venkateshwara Rao who accompanied Vidwan S Shankar.

Abhishek Raghuram's concert was a tribute to saint Thyagaraja on the day of his Aradhana. Similarly Sudha Raghunathan gave a thematic concert singing the keertanas of saint Purandaradasa as a tribute on the day of his aradhana.

There was also a musical tribute to Dr. V. Doreswamy Iyengar by the duo D Balakrishna on the veena and V Vamshidhar on the flute. Dr. TS Satyavathi gave a scholarly concert which was a tribute to her guru Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. R.K. Srikantan.

The concert series concluded with the Thyagaraja Aradhana which was conducted jointly along with the Devagiri Venkateshwara Temple in their temple premises which reverberated with everyone singing the Pancharathna kritis bringing a fitting end to the almost month long concert series.

There was also a two day music programme in February. The first day was a musical discourse by Dushyanth Sridhar on the subject Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam. With his superb oratory skills, deep knowledge of the Sanskrit as well as Tamil scriptures, he delved deep into the subject and had the audience riveted to each and every word spoken. He was given very good support on vocal by Apoorva and Anahita, Vaibhav Raman on the violin and Akshay Anand on the mridangam who embellished the musical discourse with their accompaniment.

The very much awaited concert of Sangita Kalanidhi Sanjay Subrahmaniam was held the next day. He lived up to the high expectations of the rasikas. He was accompanied by S Varadarajan on the violin, Neyveli B Venkatesh on the mridangam, N Guruprasad on the ghatam and B Rajashekar on the Morsing.



**65th Karnatic Classical Music
Concerts - Jan 2020**



Lalgudi Jayaraman - One of our greatest musicians



Guru Karaikudi R Mani as told to C Ramakrishnan, Chennai
Prepared based on an interview with the Mridangam Maestro

Lalgudi as an accompanist

India is a blessed country, having given birth to many legendary musicians over many centuries and Violin Maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman occupies a formidable place among the great musicians. As a music student, I have heard his concerts over radio many times accompanying stalwarts of those days like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, G.N.Balasubramaniam, Alathur Brothers, Sem-mangudi Sreenivasa Iyer etc and each time I stood amazed at his virtuosity. With my limited knowledge at that young age, I felt that his violin almost sang the song. He was like a blotting paper. He could exactly reproduce the sangatis in raga alapana as well as in swaraprastarams rolled out by the vocalist and he could embellish them further. He always maintained proportion in his returns. Those days, each vocalist had different bani and he could easily adapt to any style of the vocalist. I have heard that those senior vidwans used to give their dates after

checking the availability of Lalgudi Jayaraman. As a student of laya, I keenly observed his kanakku vazhakku and wondered at his razor sharp intelligence.

After passing away of the great masters of the previous generation, there arose a vacuum and then Lalgudi himself suggested musicians of the next generation like Madurai Somu, Mahara-japuram Santhanam, DK Jayaraman, Nedunuri,, Voleti, Balamuralikrishna, Seshagopalan to various sabhas and he accompanied them. All the musicians had great respect for the Violin Maestro and with Lalgudi on the violin, the concerts were on a different level in terms of vidwath, spontaneity and seriousness of approach. Somu, too in the sabha concerts where Lalgudi had accompanied, took care to adhere to the traditional format. Coming to Santhanam, Lalgudi was way senior to him and Santhanam considered Lalgudi to be his role model. The Santhanam- Lalgudi combo was a great crowd





puller team and the duo presented many concerts all over the country. Taking inspiration from Lalgudi, Santhanam also composed many tillanas.

Lalgudi as a soloist

Lalgudi was the first artiste who could engage the rasikas in a four hour instrumental concert. All his solo concerts were housefull. He brought a unique status for Violin duets and trios- first with Srimati and then with G.J.R Krishnan and Vijayalakshmi. The Jan 1 concert in MFAC was a great event looked forward by the enthusiastic music lovers. The concert used to last for four hours- and myself and Lalgudi played continuously for 16 years in the venue. Not a single person would leave before the end of the concert. That was the power of his music. Similarly we played on Dec 25 every year evening slot continuously for 18 years for Bharat Kalachar. Many people flocked to the venues to hear our combination.

Because of my meditation and blessings of my Guru, I have got the capacity to read one's mind. This has got much advantage in the concert. I could anticipate what he would be playing and play exactly along with the violin. Once in a concert in Bharat Kalachar, he had prepared swara patterns well in advance and was playing the same. But because of my reading of his

mind, I could exactly play along in a few such rounds. He kept his bow down and looked admiringly. He has always told that if I accompany him, I would be alert till Mangalam, unlike a few others who take it easy after the tani avar-tanam.

While playing ragams, he developed certain unique sangatis and made them his own for embellishing the raga alapanas. That is why his alapanas of ragams like Kalyaana Vasantam, Madhyamavati, Bilahari etc. became enchanting. Successive generations of artistes have absorbed those sangatis. He only introduced the practice of singing swaras called porutham – to land on the eduppu seamlessly through a logical progression to the eduppu. He was trendsetter in this aspect.

The Lalgudi bani is known as gayaki bani. He internalised the sahithyam of all the kritis including minute nuances and ravai jathi sangatis. Not many instrumental vidwans are adept in that. With assiduous practice, he had developed a unique bowing style with modulation of thick and thins shades to convey the sahithyam element clearly in the instrument. That is uniqueness of the Lalgudi bani. His violin could convey the bhavam of a song very eloquently, a notch better than the vocalist. For instance, in the song '*Theeratha vilayatu pillai*', his modulation in the words '*kallal mayanguvadu pole*'. That was his own innovation.

Some of the instrumentalists are of the view that neraval is redundant in instrumental music. But the neravals of Lalgudi will be very imaginative, bring out the intrinsic bhava of the sahithyam and full of aesthetic element and his laya prowess will be best utilised to present absorbing neravals.

He has got the God given gift for tuning of kritis. He gave a polish to many famous kritis by codifying the sangatis. His adukku sangatis for many kritis have been accepted as the authentic patantharam and sung by the musicians world over.

The Laya prowess of Lalgudi

Lalgudi is a complete musician. He is not only a violinist, but a repository of laya prowess. Play-



Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman with Maharajapuram Santhanam and Guru Karaikudi Mani (undated file photo of the giants)

ing with him opened new vistas for me in the mridangam. Thus our combination meant a sumptuous feast for the music rasikas. Lalgudi used to enjoy my tani avartanam. He will put talam with perfection and concentration. He used to appreciate my transition between nadais during the tani avartanam. Chatusram to tisram, chatusram to khandam, chatusram to mishram, it would be precisely falling in the exact place. No hanky panky affairs. That layam is not acquired by simple learning. Layam should become a part of your body. Then only you can achieve that perfection.

Once in a Bharat Kalachar concert, during tani avartanam, I had prepared some solkattu and was employing that and he was putting talam. When I landed in chatusram, at the end, he appreciated my intelligence and craftsmanship. After each concert, we used to review the performance over phone the same night.

Lalgudi has presented many complex pallavis. We have released a CD containing some complex pallavis. Before any concert, I will request for the same, do my part of home work and go well prepared to accompany in the concert. The concert is a team effort and our aim is for the success of the concert. No room for ego clash in a concert.

Lalgudi as a composer

Lalgudi has composed many kritis, varnams and tillanas and he has become a role model for many of the successive musicians like Santhanam, TN Seshagopalan, TR Subramaniam to tread the path of a composer. There are lot of intricate kanakku vazhakku in the tillanas and a percussionist will not be able to embellish it in the concert unless he does his homework. An interesting incident that happened in the beginning of my career with Lalgudi is worth quoting here.

My first concert with Lalgudi was arranged by Auto parts Natarajan, Secretary of Music Academy for a marriage in his house in the early 1970s. I had prepared well and took all the care to impress the legendary violinist and he appreciated my tani avartanam also. At the end, he played his own Tillana in the ragam Tilang. This had lot of laya intricacies and I had never heard this tillana. So I fumbled a little and I could not notice the mischievous smile of Lalgudi. I got much offended by that sarcasm and I could not sleep that day. So before the next concert, I collected all his varnams and tillanas from various sources, internalised them and prepared myself for any challenge. When I accompanied excellently in the next concert for a different tillana, he was so happy and appreciated me. I took

each concert as a challenge and prepared myself for the examination.

Foreign tours with Lalgudi

Most of the concerts in the initial days were Radio concerts as there were very few sabhas those days. A concert of Lalgudi and myself was sent by AIR Madras for an International competition of Instrumental music. It got first prize in international level and the award was to be received in Baghdad. The prize winning team had to present a live concert before receiving the prize. VK Narayana Menon, Secretary, Sangeeth Natak Akademi advised both of us to go to Baghdad for the purpose. But I was not inclined to go abroad at that time. Somebody else accompanied Lalgudi for the purpose. Thus I missed the first foreign concert with Lalgudi.

In 1993 I met with an accident and fractured my right arm - I could not play any concert for three months. Lalgudi was one musician who shed tears in the hospital when he came to see me. He prayed for my fast recovery. Sruti Laya Kendra in London is the oldest organisation established by me. I was going to Germany for a concert series via London and he was coming from America via London. So I requested him for a concert in London. He was apprehensive about my faculties because of the accident. But I reposed confidence on my Guruji. The concert was held in Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. At my first

stroke of 'dhim', he was so happy and tears came in his eyes. That was the respect and affection he had for me. That was our first foreign concert.

Recordings

We have released many commercial recordings and all of them have been received very well by music lovers. Lalgudi released a cassette of Tillanas under the music direction of one Shyam. During the time of mixing, Lalgudi was not satisfied with the mridangam accompaniment and I had to step in. I played for four tillanas out of the total of eight tillanas.

Jugalbandi

Krishna Gana Sabha organised a felicitation function to Lalgudi for completing 50 solo concerts in that sabha. Lata Mangeshkar was the Chief Guest. A Jugalbandi of Lalgudi with Amjad Ali Khan, Zakir Husain was arranged and I was invited to participate in that. On all important matters in my life, I used to take my Guruji's consent. When I sought my Guru's permission, he did not approve. Lalgudi said, "If you play with these artistes, you will get all India acclaim and that will lead you to international opportunities. You are not utilising the chances." I said I will wait for another chance. As my Guru expected, Zakir Hussain invited me very soon and I participated in many Jugalbandis thereafter.

Vocal Music Classes at Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira



The founders of Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira, Karnataka Kalashree Smt. GV Ranganayakamma and Smt. GV Neela dedicated their lives for propagating and teaching Karnatak classical music. We are happy to inform you that SRLKM will be resuming Karnatak Vocal music classes shortly at the institution premises.

For more details, contact Anagha Yoganand at 9880098940

Violin Maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman

A Rasika's perspective



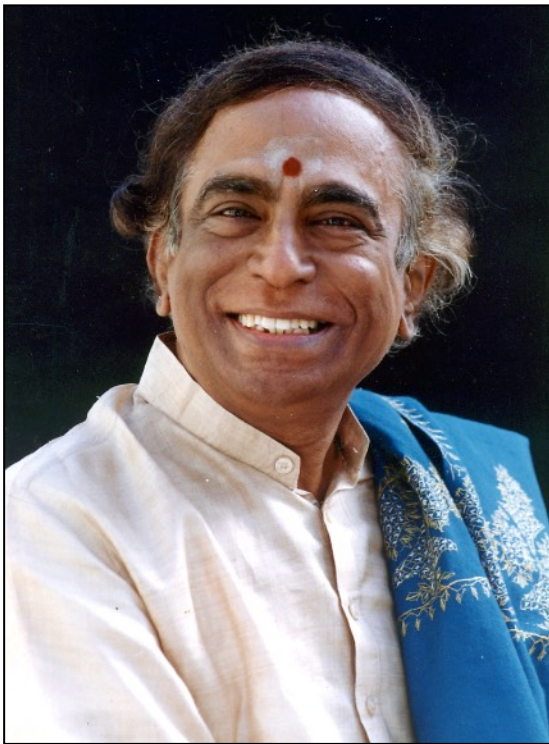
Prof. Ramesh Balasubramaniam, University of California in Merced, USA

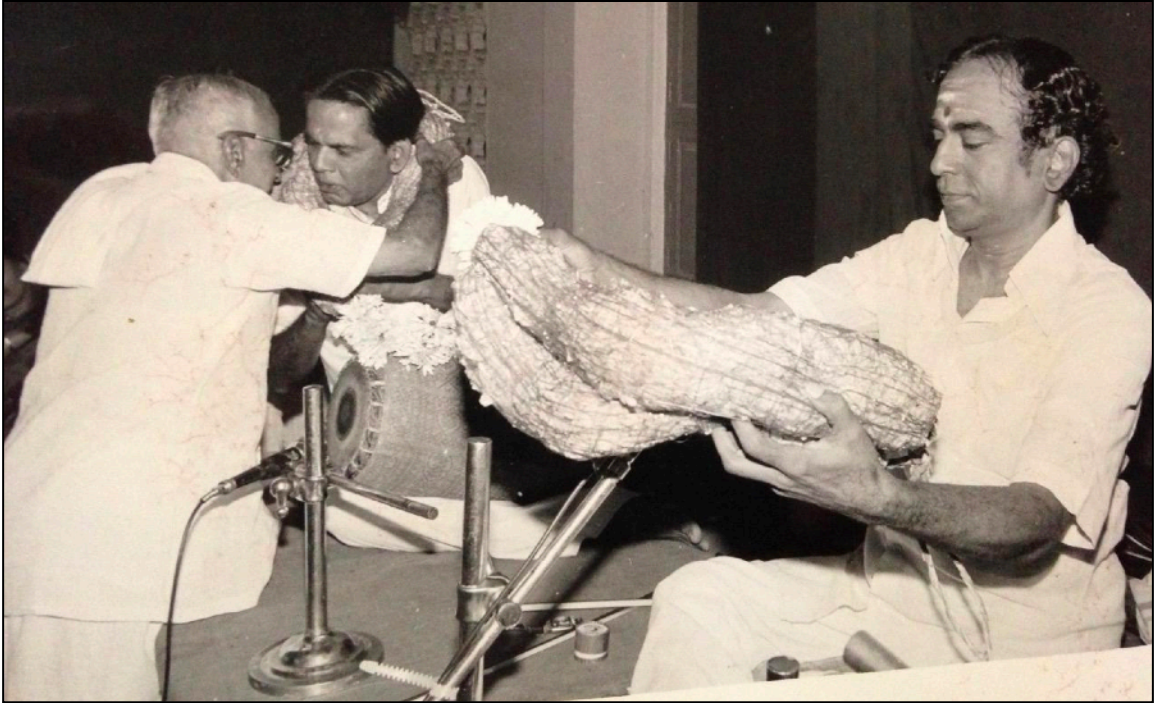
There are few figures in the history of Carnatic music who stand out like Lalgudi Sri Jayaraman. His brilliance and legacy have stood the test of time, be it as an accompanist par excellence, solo and duet performer who lifted the violin to centre stage, or as a stellar composer/vaggeyakkara whose compositions have found their way to the concert repertoire of many leading artistes today. However, I knew him due to my family's long association with him as just Lalgudi mama.

Although our families have known each other since the early 1950s, I came into close contact

with the Lalgudis, in the 1970s as my father served as their family physician for close to five decades. Over this period, our families developed a warm kinship and camaraderie. Every wedding or special occasion over these years in my family featured a Lalgudi concert. I was thus privileged to see a side of him that most music rasikas did not have access to. My earliest memories of the maestro are from going to the Navaratri events at the Lalgudi household in the presence of the venerable Lalgudi Sri VR Gopala Iyer. The doyen would often engage me playfully and show me his collection of miniature violins. This is when I realised that the entire family was fascinated with the craft and science behind the instrument. Sri VR Gopala Iyer had an incredible sense of humour and found a musical way to engage several young children including myself. I was already able to see the foundations and pedagogical methods that were used to raise the Maestro into the perfectionist that he was.

I was not fortunate to experience Lalgudi accompanying the greats of the golden era, except for Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, whom he accompanied well into the 1980s. I have only heard of these experiences through my father and uncle who used to go from Perambur to Mylapore by foot to see him perform with GNB, Madurai Mani Iyer and Alathur Brothers. His accompaniment for these great vidwans is legendary. There are plenty of anecdotes in the public domain that speak for themselves. However, I had the opportunity to listen to him with the vidwans like Voleti Venkateswaralu, Neddunuri Krishnamoorthy, D.K. Jayaraman, Maharajapuram Santhanam, and the redoubtable M. Balamuralikrishna; each of them bringing a very diverse element and vocal style to the concert





Kalpathi Ramanathan (authors grandfather) honouring Lalgudi Jayaraman and Vellore Ramabadrhan

stage. What struck me most was how he was able to absorb each of their styles and yet remain independent in his own identity. He was able to morph and adapt to the performance of the vocalist even when he played back to back concerts! And after each concert he made time to meet with rasikas to discuss the day's events while reflecting on the subtleties of his performance that day.

This amazing adaptability is in stark contrast with the unrelenting consistency that he approached his solo concerts with. It became apparent to me that he had absorbed all the nuances of these various vocalists and had evolved a voice of his own. And this voice can be seen in all of Lalgudi mama's creations and compositions. So much so, that even vocalist and vainikas who are followers of his bani have imbibed the aesthetics of his violin's interpretations of musical ideas. Some of his instrumental renditions of 'Na Jeevadhara' (Bilahari), 'Adamodi galade' (Charukesi), or even the lighter pieces like 'Theeratha vilayattu pillai' have become the gold standard that many vocalists follow today.

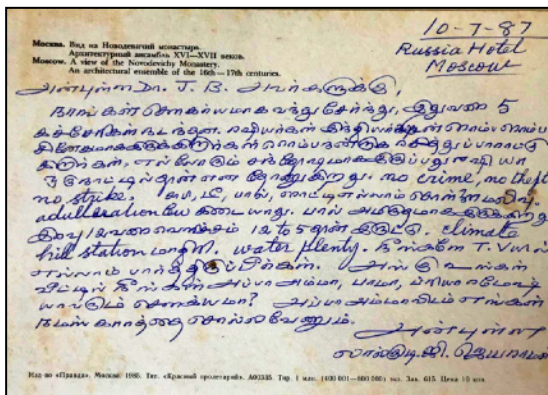
My father's relationship with Lalgudi mama was much more than that of a physician. As an ardent Rasika himself, he developed a strong friendship with the maestro. Lalgudi mama

would invite him on concert tours when they traveled by train to many different places in South India. On one such overnight journey, Lalgudi mama decided to sit down on the lower berth of the train well after all others had gone to bed. My father recalls that Lalgudi mama was humming and keeping the beat with his hands for a good part of the evening while the others were fast asleep. When the train reached the destination in the morning, he demonstrated a new thillana in Kaanada with fully polished lyrics to them all. It is unclear what part of the journey that he found the requisite inspiration to create such a masterpiece. But what always struck me about Lalgudi mama was his ability to see beauty in the most frivolous things and events in the world, even a simple train journey. He had a childlike fascination for just about everything and the world was constantly inspiring him to create. This unique sensibility that Lalgudi mama had is best captured by Blake's auguries of innocence: To see a World in a Grain of Sand, And a Heaven in a Wild Flower; Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand, And Eternity in an hour.

I left for the United States in the early 1990s to pursue a doctorate. I remained in close contact with him and would often visit the maestro at his house during my trips back home. He would

ask me questions about the human brain and its proclivity to appreciate and understand music. So much so, that it inspired me to take up the study the effect of music on the brain, which I continue to be professionally involved in to this day. Lalgudi mama would also ask me questions about other forms of music and had a great fascination for the discipline and scholarship of western classical musicians. He was extremely curious about science and often said that art had a lot to learn from the discipline of science and its systematic method of inquiry.

The letter below demonstrates his absolute fascination for the world and its wonders as a traveler



(Dear Dr. J.B,
After we reached here, we have had 5 kutcheris. Russians are very very friendly with Indians. They enjoy and appreciate the programs very much. It looks as though Russia is the only country where everyone seems to be happy. No crime, no theft, no strike.. coffee, tea, milk and bread are all very cheap. No adulteration. Milk is like nectar. It's bright till 12 midnight. It's dark only between 12 and 5. Climate is like that of a hill station. Water is plentiful. You might have seen on TV. I hope yourself, your

father, mother, Bama and Priya Ramesh are all fine there. Please convey our namaskarams to your father and mother)

Cognitive scientists have demonstrated that human speech and language evolved from our ability to harness the sounds of nature, sounds we've evolved over millions of years to readily understand and communicate with each other. Although more abstract, music - seemingly one of the most human of inventions - is literally built on our ability to extract meaning from sounds and patterns of sound that have existed since the beginning of time. What Lalgudi mama was able to do was to tap into the beauty in all the elements that he saw and present it through the mastery of his instrument and the musical idiom in general. Lalgudi mama's music represents to me the very purpose that music evolved for. This music will continue to inspire people around the world for posterity.

(Dr. Ramesh Balasubramaniam is a Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of California in Merced. He has trained at the University of Connecticut, Harvard University and Dartmouth College and has taught Neuroscience in the US, UK, and Canada. His research focuses on the influence of music on the brain, with a specific focus on how the brain processes beats and rhythm. Ramesh learned mridangam from his grandfather Sri Kalpathi Ramanathan (disciple of Palghat Mani Iyer). His father Dr. J Balasubramaniam enjoyed a close friendship with Lalgudi Jayaraman in addition to being his physician for several decades. More about Ramesh at <http://www.rameshlab.com>)

One of Lalgudi's favourite hobbies was solving mathematical puzzles. His ability to decipher the laya intricacies embedded in complex pallavis and his penchant for infusing intriguing rhythmic patterns into compositions was probably a musical extension of the affinity.

Lalgudi Jayaraman - style and contributions



Chitraveena N Ravikiran, Chennai

Courtesy 'The Hindu', Originally written for The Hindu in Apr 2013 as an Obit.

It takes an exceptionally original artist to create a distinctive style. If he is also a passionate guru with a large following, the style expands to a school over decades. Very few artistes can lay claim to the distinction of taking this to a whole new level and impacting musicians from diverse schools, creating a bani (gharana). That Lalgudi Jayaraman had the distinction of accomplishing all these within two decades of his arrival into the concert arena speaks eloquently about his legendary calibre. The Lalgudi bani was up and running even by mid -1960s with traces of his approach and technique visible in violinists from many schools. Today, it is one of the most admired banis in the field.

It would be no exaggeration to state that the Lalgudi-impact has extended well beyond the violin. Not many artistes have achieved a larger-than-their-area-of-specialty status, influencing vocalists, other instrumentalists as well as composers. The sheer weight of his contributions as musician, pedagogue and composer are stunning.

Style

The Lalgudi style was formed as much by constant intellectual introspection as by discipline, focus and regular practice over years. It is marked as much by grammatical correctness as by aesthetic elegance, anchored as much by

Nedanuri Krishnamurthy accompanied by Lalgudi Jayaraman on Violin and Vellore Ramabhadran on Mridangam and Bangalore Manjunath on Ghatam. (Undated file photo of a concert at Sree Ramaseva Mandali, Fort High School, Chamarajpet, Bangalore.)



rigour and variety in repertoire as by imagination and inventiveness in improvisation and is a statement of consummate artistry. The distinctiveness of his bowing as well as left-hand fingering technique created a whole new signature in Indian music, bringing in elements of vocalisation without short-serving instrumental beauty.

His thorough knowledge of lyrics, meanings, and spirit of compositions, enabled him to project them in manner that served as a salutary example even to vocalists. His grasp of the Carnatic tradition led him to innovate within the boundaries of tradition with a freshness that was not merely a product of novelty. His command over the violin was such that he never needed to indulge in cross-cultural forays to gain international attention. A pure Carnatic recording was all it took to earn him a number one ranking among 77 music recordings from all over the world.

Accompanist

A stunning ability to absorb complicated melodic phrases and inconceivably intricate rhythmic structures in a matter of seconds and reproduce them with aplomb, set Lalgudi apart as an accompanist. Not content with this, he challenged himself to grasp the individual styles and spirit of the artist he teamed up with - be it Ariyakkudi, GNB, Semmangudi, Madurai Mani Iyer or the Alathur Brothers, which enabled him to alter his own responses to suit the occasion

instead of merely playing in a generic style throughout his career.

Soloist

Brilliant concert planning, rigorous rehearsals (with sister Srimati or children Krishnan and Viji), exemplary choice of compositions, compelling improvisation, exciting cadences, command over speeds, range and dynamics were some of the hallmarks of Lalgudi solos. As he himself told me once, "A good artist must be a marga-darshi (model artist) and strive to not only entertain but also to educate". This mindset ensured that his recitals provided instant appeal as well as take-home value.

Guru

The very fact that a large number of non-violinists also queued up to learn from Lalgudi is the biggest testimony to his overall musicianship. His depth of knowledge, incisive analytical skills, clear communication, and exemplary execution inspired many and shaped several careers.

Composer

Lalgudi's pieces stand tall for their original approach to melody and rhythm as well as accessible lyrics. His creations - especially varnams and tillanas - have become automatic choices of leading musicians and dancers the world over.

Lalgudi Jayaraman was not just a musician of an era - he was an era by himself...

It was the twenty-seventh of February 1951. The name of the artist announced was Lalgudi G Jayaraman. I sat to listen as usual. Within minutes I was astounded to see that the raga Suddha Dhanyasi was played with perfection, ease, and fluency. It was faultless and the succession of ideas was simply racing and the Keerthana 'entanerchina' was packed with ragabhava. It was impossible for me, sitting before a radio set, to imagine how the violinist could have evolved a fingering to produce perfect Suddha Dhanyasi. In those days, violinists had not evolved a technique and fingering with which they could play ragas like Suddha Dhanyasi and Todi perfectly and satisfactorily. Therefore this violinist surprised me beyond all expectations. Equally stunning was the intensity of feeling, the intensity of ragabhava he displayed in his recital

- Nagaraja, violinist and fan of Lalgudi

Sangeetha Kala Ratna Lalgudi Jayaraman



Excerpts from the proceedings of the 29th Musical Conference

Courtesy :The Bangalore Gayana Samaja

Translation credit - Sachi R Sachidananda, Bangalore

Sri. Lalgudi Jayaraman was unanimously elected the 29th Musical conference president in 1997. He stayed in Bangalore for 8 days and presided over one of the best music conference in the history of The Bangalore Gayana Samaja. Some excerpts from the inaugural session is reproduced.

Address by Sangeetha Kala Ratna Vid. Bangalore K Venkataram

Dear members on the dais, vidwans, and art-lovers,

I am here to formally propose the name of Vid. Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman to preside over this 29th annual conference of the Gayana Samaja. The Gayana Samaja President has already given considerable information in his welcome speech about Vidwan Lalgudi Jayaraman. Yet, as I formally propose his Presidentship, I consider it appropriate to mention his eminent suitability for this honour.

Sri. Lalgudi and I have known each other since 1947. As a young man he used to sport a tuft (*kudumi*), and wear ear-studs. I used to meet him during his stay with the family of Mr. Srinivasan and Mrs. Rajalakshmi in Gavipuram. At that time, he used to accompany Vidwans T. K. Rangachary, Sattur Subrahmanyam and others.

Sri. Lalgudi Jayaraman's musical personality shines as a multifaceted one. This 29th conference makes us think of the 29th sooladi tala, a very long tala cycle. I make a connection here as I think of Sri. Lalgudi Jayaraman's great laya prowess. Likewise, this is the 93rd year of the Samaja. 3, 9, and such odd numbers are associated with laya intricacies in our music. Add 7 to

93, we will soon have our centenary. Like the 7 notes in a raga scale- Saptaswaras, Sri. Jayaraman's musical personality has seven glowing facets.

- I. An ideal accompanist. Be it Sri. Mudikondan, Sri. Musiri, Sri. Madurai Mani, or Sri. Flute Mali, Sri. Lalgudi excelled with his accompaniment. Just the other day, during Sri. Mudikondan's centenary event, we were listening to a recording of his music with Sri. Lalgudi's accompaniment. Speaking in that recording, Sri. Semmangudi describes how Sri. Lalgudi hails from a famous lineage of five generations, and describes his musical prowess as "fiery". Fiery does not mean that it will burn everything, but it can swallow anything on offer - in Sri. Lalgudi's case he will digest and master it musically. As we have been following his career, his accompaniment to Sri. Ariyakudi, Sri. Semmangudi, Sri. GNB, Sri. Alathoor, later on Sri. Rangachary, Sri. Madurai Somu, Sri. MDR, and recently vidwans like Sri. TRS, Sri. Seshagopalan, - four generations of artistes; we can see that he has provided ideal accompaniment to each one of the musicians, best suited to their styles. He was equally at ease accompanying Sri. Balachander as he was with Sri. Doreswamy Iyengar. He would combine so well and then add his own genius to exemplify what is ideal accompaniment.

In this context, I have to say that even if we listen multiple times and try to learn intricate musical ideas from those concerts, e.g. of Alathur brothers with Sri. Lalgudi and Sri.



Inauguration of the 29th Musical conference at The Bangalore Gayana Samaja. Left to Right- AR Chandradas Gupta, Former Secretary, Dept. of Kannada and Culture, KH Srinivasa, Former minister of Govt. of Karnataka, Lalgudi Jayaraman, H Kamalanath, Former President The Bangalore Gayana Samaja.

Mani Iyer, we will give up and conclude that it is Sri. Lalgudi's indecipherable brilliance on display.

2. The second facet of Sri. Lalgudi is as a soloist. His violin concerts - solo, and with his father first, then later his sister Srimathi, and then his children...he simply used to excel as a soloist.
3. The third facet - as an ideal Guru. Not only his direct disciples, but so many who have emulated him and shown us his high standard as a teacher,
4. The fourth -his own unique Lalgudi violin style. He was the first in Carnatic music to bring into violin playing the feature of "poruttams". Just as Sri. Palani Subrahmanya Pillai incorporated novel features of poruttams in his mridangam play, Sri, Lalgudi has brought in these structural elegances so melodiously and established an ideal violin solo style.
5. Sri. Lalgudi is also an adept and efficient organiser. he has been conducting the Thiruvavur Musical Trinity conference for a few years now and we have seen his great

organising abilities when he came to Bangalore for fund raising.

6. Sri. Lalgudi as a composer. His varnams and thillanas sound so beautiful to the listeners but when we try to learn and perform them, they are really tough compositions to crack. Only the accompanists would know how tough it is to accompany these compositions...as Sri. Bhaktavatsalam will attest.
7. The last but not the least: a wonderful human being with a great understanding of how to deal with one and all - students, family, sabha organisers, listeners, functionaries...Sri. Lalgudi is a role model for one's conduct in music and in life.

One can conclude that Sri.Lalgudi belongs to the group of the ever-great men of all times, like Sri. Rajaratham Pillai, Sri. Mahalingam, Sri. Palghat Mani Iyer - a very special group of people indeed. Be it raga bhava, laya bhava, musical permutations, or complex ideas - he will present it in a masterly way with his stamp of beauty to enthral audiences and experts.

Sri. Lalgudi is a great musical personality for all of us to celebrate. I consider that his Presi-



Prof. SK Ramachandra Rao delivering a speech in the morning session as Lalgudi, the conference president looks on. Along with Lalgudi is Prof. N Ramanathan.

dentship of the conference is an honour for our Samaja.

Sri. Kamalanath mentioned that so far we had only Presidents from within Karnataka for our conferences, but this time we are inviting a great vidwan from a neighbouring state. He also mentioned how Madras organisations have honoured our musicians like Sri. Rallapalli. Sri. Doreswamy Iyengar and others. There are many other instances also. So it is highly appropriate that we have chosen this Maha Vidwan this time to be our President, and I heartily propose the same as my formal duty and seek your support.

Sangeetha Kala Ratna Prof. SK Ramachandra Rao

As I formally second Sri. Venkataram's motion, I think it is appropriate to adduce some supporting reasons, although he has covered most of the points.

I have also been listening to Sri. Lalgudi Jayaraman's violin for around 50 years. The first time was when I heard him accompany Sri. Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar.

What we noticed even when we were young was that there was an ineluctable, ineffable sweetness in his violin play. There were real violin stalwarts at that time - Sri. Dwaram, Sri. Govindawamy Pillai and so on. Sri. Lalgudi was then a very young man with a *kudumi*. From that time itself, the sweetness in his bow was unique

and captivating. The raga bhava would flow out so smoothly. In addition, in his playing, he used to give due importance to the Saahitya. Usually, the violinists do not pay any heed to the Saahitya, but just focus on reproducing the ragas and musical phrases. What we did notice, on the other hand, in Sri Lalgudi's violin playing, was that if one knew the song and its Saahitya, one could follow his violin sounds and sing the words along to oneself. He had this rare ability to reproduce Saahitya on the violin even as a young man.

My guru, Sri. Rallapalli Anantha Krishna Sharma used to say that this type of musical genius did not come as just an inborn talent. It did not also come merely from assiduous practice. Not also from listening to others and emulating them. It always came through a great tradition. Sri. Lalgudi belongs to the Saint Thyagaraja tradition. How many generations in his family have developed themselves in this glorious tradition, within its framework, in this "*akhada*"!

Then later I remembered a saying of Sri Adi Shankaracharya in his Brahmasutra Bhashya. सर्वशास्त्रविदपि असम्प्रदायवित् मूर्खवदुपेक्षणीयः - A scholar may know all shastras, he may be very famous, he may have great intellectual brilliance, but if he does not know "sampradaya" or 'tradition', we should discard him as a fool.



Pejawar Mutt chief's Vishwesha Theertha Swamiji handing over Udupi Prasadam to Lalgudi Jayaraman, Conference president as H Kamalanath, former Bangalore Gayana Samaja president looks on (A file photo of October 1997)

This certainly does not apply to Sri.Lalgudi, even though it may apply to many other musicians. Their music is transient and chimerical. It will disappear after some time. But what is the genetic make-up of Sri.Lalgudi's music? Preserving a glorious tradition. The tradition of Saint Thyagaraja with its melodic sweetness, the importance given to Saahitya, the place accorded to bhava, the synthesis of bhakti into the music. All of this has been carefully preserved by Sri.Lalgudi. That has brought him worldwide acclaim.

It is not merely one's own ability and achievement, but it is the power of the tradition one upholds, that pervades one's total being and flows in one's blood always. We can see that Sri. Lalgudi exemplifies this. It is not *Vyakti* but *Sampradaya's Shakti*. That is the reason for his being chosen as the best one to preside over this annual conference.

The other point made, about Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and so on honouring artistes, does not strike to me as right. There are no different sampradayas like Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and such. There is but one single sampradaya or tradition of our music that is unbroken and handed down through generations. Sri. Lalgudi exemplifies this and hence is eminently suitable

to preside over this conference. We do not need to rationalise our choice and explain how they chose one of ours and so this choice, etc.

And after all, Sri.Lalgudi also belongs to Karnataka! His grandfather Sri. Rama Iyer was the Asthana vidwan of Mumtaz Ali Krishna Raja Wadiyar. I know even where his house was in Mysore.

Thus it gives me great joy to second Sri.Lalgudi's choice as President. The word *anumodane* (supporting the selection) has in it the word *moda* which means delight. I am delighted to support Sri. Lalgudi Jayaraman's Presidentship of the conference.

Sangeetha Kala Ratna Lalgudi Jayaraman inaugural address

Sri. KH Srinivasa Ex. Minister of Karnataka, a great music lover, Sri. AR Chandrashekhara Gupta, Secretary to Govt. Kannada and Culture, Sri. Kamalanath, President Gayana Samaja, Vice President Sri. Suryanarayana Setty, and Sri. Krishna Prasad, Honorary Secretary, Vidwans, Vidhushis, and Rasikas,

The Bangalore Gayana Samaja is one of the oldest cultural institutions of our country, more than 9 decades old, It has been rendering yeo-

man service to propagate, promote, popularise our unique cultural heritage. It is indeed a great privilege for me to preside over the annual conference this year of such a prestigious organisation. Karnataka has always held a special place in my heart. The discerning music lovers of the state have been singular in the sense that they have unhesitatingly and spontaneously extended their heartfelt appreciation and support to the deserving artists transcending all regional parameters. My ancestral vidwans like Lalgudi Rama Iyer, Radhakrishna Iyer, and Guruswamy Iyer were the asthana vadvans of the erstwhile royal court of Mysore during the time of Mummudi Krishnaraja Wadiyar. It was only later on that they moved to the south. I am extremely proud that the association of my family with the state of Karnataka has existed for more than four generations and my own personal association with the Gayana Samaja is as far back as 1953 when I accompanied Vidwan Mayavaram Rajam.

I am reminded of small thatched Sankaraiah Hall where the sabha used to function years ago and where I played for Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Ramnad Krishnan and many other renowned musicians. These are the sentiments that prompted me to accept this honour from the Gayana Samaja.

Music is a gift of God to mankind. This precious art form is a great physical and mental healer that removes sorrow and brings conflicting minds together and creates joyful, tranquil ambience and makes the world a much better place to live in. In the contemporary global scenario that is ridden with strife, conflict, and unrest, music acts as an effective remedy to assuage the heart and mind and immensely enriches the personality of the individuals.

It is at this juncture in our lives that we should remember with deep gratitude our musical forefathers who have so well systematised the discipline of Karnatic music and handed it on a platter to subsequent generations for their guidance and benefit.

Lakshyam and Lakshnam that is aesthetic and grammar are the two vital components of Karnatic music. It is true that one can not exist

without the other. Artistes should equip themselves in both these aspects thoroughly as they form the bedrock of Karnatic music.

Cultural institutions that include conferences, and seminars in their agenda bringing musicians and musicologists together on a common platform to discuss and exchange ideas and contribute to the overall awareness and growth of Karnatic music are to be welcomed with open arms.

In the bygone eras, music and other art-forms enjoyed the patronage of rulers of states like Mysore, Ramanathapuram, Thiruvananthapuram, and others. After the exit of royalty from the scene, cultural institutions like Gayana Samaja have weathered many a storm to keep our cultural legacy intact and in good shape. All India Radio has played a very significant role all through these years and has to be given much credit for the motivation provided to artists for its invaluable service for the increased awareness and development of Indian music. I hope and pray that even after the Prasara Bharati act, AIR continues to support its music as before.

The Haridasas of Karnataka like Vyasaraya, Vijaya Vittala, Kamalesha Vittala, and Kanakadasa and others spread the cult of bhakti traveling from place to place singing devotional hymns and creating a great impact even among the less initiated. But the towering musician saint among the Haridasas was Purandaradasa who became an icon even in his own time is to Karnatic music what 'Hippocrates' is to modern medicine.

During the pre trinity period, when compositions were not available in large numbers, it is believed that during his concert a Vidwan used to concentrate on an elaborate raga delineation, follow it with singing of thanam and pallavi and end the program with light songs. It must be mentioned that the sabhas are largely responsible for Kutcheri format that was conceived quite some decades ago. This format has become so popular that it is indispensable. Vidwans like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar became trend setters in the Kutcheri paddati that has attracted more and more rasikas to appreciate the innate beauty of the system of Karnatic mu-

sic. Songs in different languages by various composers and lilting tukudas in post Pallavi's sessions were presented to cater to the taste of the cross-section of music lovers.

In those days when the amplification system was not in existence, the contribution of the Nagaswaram towards increasing the popularity and appeal of the Karnatic music can not be adequately described. A Nagaswaram music in temple functions and during the procession functions of the proceeding deities in the calm and still hours of the night had a remarkable reach and enveloped people in its magic. It can be said that instead of people going to listen to music, the music was brought to them. I still remember in my very early days, I had the good fortune of enjoying most of the great Nagaswaram exponents.

The pressures of the modern age, the hectic pace of everyday life, and other distractions have been responsible for limiting the duration of the concert little more than 2 hours rather than the five hours Kutcheri that were in vogue during the early part of the century. This is somewhat comparable to one day game in cricket attracting more spectators than a five day test match. In music concert today, all though the time is of essence, there is also a compelling need for the artists to satisfy both the lay and the enlightened. In the restricted span of time, musicians have to strive hard to communicate effectively their musical ideas.

The musical trinity Thyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Shyama Sastry have left us a magnificent legacy in the form of soul-stirring compositions filled with devotion. The popularity of Karnatic music and global recognition that it enjoys today is largely due to the immortal compositions of the Trinity. Their songs have the methodical structure of Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam that became a real boon to successive generations. The melodic and rhythmic aspects in our music are rare things of joy and beauty. Raga expression in Indian music is something that is not present in any global system of music. Raga is remarkable because it has NO lyrics or syllables and has on the spot improvi-

sations that has the quality to generate an atmosphere surcharged with pure melody and emotions. The raga delineation is the pinnacle of our system of music. Rhythm in raga singing may not outwardly manifest, but the inbuilt laya undercurrent that flows throughout the alapana can not be ignored and what imaginative melody packed prayogas pertaining to the appropriate kalapramana are some. The results are divine. The gamaka nuances in vilamba prayogas and the beauty of the madhyama kala phrases and the fast mercurial brigas all carry a rhythm of their own.

Various ragas have different kala pramanas. Some raga glow with slow, sedate tempo and others lend themselves only to madhyama kala elaborations. Thus our music is a providing of melody animated by intrinsic rhythm.

It has become a matter of debate whether bhakti is an essential ingredient in Karnatic music. The compositions of our saints were not meant to be viable commercial propositions but were extensions of the devotion filled soul of the composers that were in total communion with the supreme being thus it is when Thyagaraja refused patronage of various kings, he sang '*nidhichala sukham*' and emphasised that service to Lord Rama was above everything else in the world for him.

The most important facet of a kriti is its sangathi structure which is an amazing evaluation. The sangathis are like the petals of a rose one on top of another resulting in an extremely beautiful musical artefact. Thyagaraja's imagination bloomed in full the artistic expression of the sangathis that reflected the music and the Saahitya bhava effectively and colourfully. However, we must remember that their kritis were really their offering to the God and did not envisage the present day kutcheri atmosphere. Therefore in the present day atmosphere of sabha kutcheri, certain adaptations are understandable. The sangathis should continue to be purposeful appropriately relating to the raga bhava and Saahitya bhava and should not be for the mere sake of sangathis.

The Vadi and Samvadi element of our system is the key to the raga gaining popularity. If Kalyani, Thodi, Sankarabharanam, Bhairavi, Kamboji etc. don't suffer staleness, it is most certainly because of the Vadi, Samvadi poruttam. The word classical is derived from Greek and Latin meaning FIRST CLASS. In classical Indian music, raga delineation, self improvisation, and gamaka nuances are the unique features. The different types of gamakas are mirrored in the raga alapana and they contribute much to enhance the beauty of the raga. Parsvadeva in his 'Sangita Samayasara' says music without gamaka is like a moonless night, a river without water, a Peepal tree without flowers and a woman without ornaments.

When society changes due to the passage of time, its taste also undergoes a change. Just as running water changes its colour in different levels and terrines, art also undergoes change according to the change in the mental dispositions of the society. Some traditional ragas 'Ghanta' and 'Mangala Kaisiki' were very popular during the 18th and 19th centuries. Thyagaraja has created a number of kritis in the Ghanta raga but they are rarely heard today. Some time ago, ragas like 'Shubapanthuvrali' and 'Mukhari' were associated with the mood of pathos. Now for the same purpose, ragas like 'Sivaranjani' and 'Revathi' are employed. In any art probably the most constant thing is change.

I take this opportunity to say a few words about the violin. The advent of the violin was with the arrival of British. It is an accepted fact by the western musicologists that the origin of Violin has been traced in India and it has been referred to as Ravanastra ("ravanastron"). For the past two centuries, Violin has merged with our music and now it has become indispensable.

Baluswamy Dikshitar was the first to play and popularise it during Maharaja Swathi Thirunal period. Vadivelu played the violin in Trivandrum and was rewarded with the Ivory violin. It was Thirukodikaval Krishna Iyer who added stature to the violin by introducing it as an instrument suitable for a solo concert. Maestros such as Malaikottai Govindaswamy Pillai, Dwaram

Venkataswamy Naidu, and Mysore Chowdiah were highly respected soloists. Chowdiah was responsible for the seven-stringed violin. The violin became an integral part of our music and is admirably suitable as an accompanying instrument for vocal music concerts. It is also used to accompany other instruments such as Veena, Flute, Mandolin, Saxophone, Clarinet, and even the Nagaswaram. With no puranic background unlike the Veena, Flute, and Mridangam, the violin has attained a pride of place in the Karnatic music purely on its own merit.

In the spheres of dance and films, the violin has a significant role to play. The westerners called violin the emperor among instruments. I myself call the violin as 'sarvavyapi'.

Today there are many academically well qualified young people with bright prospects who have taken to music as a full-time profession purely out of love and passion for this art. It is indeed gratifying that the younger generation is taking seriously to Karnatic music. There is no doubt that its future is bright.

A concept of the Gurukula system of training is not practicable in the present day and age for many reasons. The Gurus of the yore had more time to spare and led a more leisurely existence. My great-grandfather Sri. Rama Iyer is believed to have spent many years as Sri. Thyagaraja's disciple living in Thiruvaiyaru with his Guru. It is not feasible today because the Guru is hard-pressed for time and secondly the student has to be equipped himself in more ways than one to meet the challenges of a fiercely competitive environment. If there were to be Gurukulas, that could impart music and academics simultaneously, then that may be the answer to the now non-existent Gurukula system.

Institutional teaching has almost become the order of the day because of increase in the demands of the larger sections of society to get musical training. But I have my own reservations about group teaching. The abilities of students may differ from person to person. The results may not be as positive as in a one-to-one students teacher relationship. Some might have a deep resonant voice that may respond better to

vilamba kala and others may have birga oriented voices more suitable for a faster kalapramanam and this necessitates a mode of teaching with attention to the capacity and voice qualities of each student.

Learning is only 25%, incessant practice, absolute focus and commitment, a continuous analytical thought process and the last but not the least 'kelvi jnanam' (listening) is the other essential factors for the healthy growth of success of a musician. Self-assessment is a vital spoke in the artistes musical wheel. My Guru and father Sri. Lalgudi VR Gopala Iyer had instilled in me, from an early age the importance of assessing my own performance and review them carefully to better my performing standards.

There is no denying the fact that the visual displays have more impact than oral. Even a layperson who does not understand the rules of Cricket or Tennis enjoys the game because of the advantage of actually watching it. But music is abstract so one has to cultivate the taste for 'nada', and address his mind to the refinement and sophistication abundantly found in Karnatic music. If he consciously keep at bay all our other senses and concentrate only on listening - not mere hearing but listening - we can derive maximum enjoyment from the waves of nada and feel thoroughly fulfilled. I would like to give a word of caution to the youngsters who have the propensity to learn music through audio cassettes. A tape recorder can never become a substitute for the Guru. A student who does not have the capacity to separate the grain from the chaff would be doing himself more harm than good by depending on the tape recorder. The recorder can only play the tapes, can it correct the mistakes and errors that may creep

in? Especially, when there is no proper personal aural guidance?

In the last three decades the standards in music have improved by leaps and bounds. The microphone, computerisation of the music and technical advancement in the recording industry have all contributed immensely to the all-round development of this fine art. Just as there are different levels of performers, there are different levels of appreciation from among the rasikas. If both strive to raise the performing and appreciation levels there is no doubt that the many splendours thing of Karnatic music will glow with an unparalleled reminiscence in the future.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the musicians, organisers, critic and most importantly the rasikas of Karnataka for their warmth, affection, and support throughout my career. I thank the president Sri. H Kamalanath of Gayana Samaja, The Vice President Sri. Suryanarayana Setty, The Honorary Secretary Sri. GV Krishna Prasad, Treasurer Dr. Dhruvanarayanan and all other office-bearers. I once again offer my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Gayana Samaja for this single recognition and honour. I conclude my address with the word 'Men may come and men may go but Karnatic music goes on forever'.

Awards only show the regard and affection that sabhas or organisers or the Government has for each chosen artiste. Above all, the most cherished award that any artiste should possibly enjoy is the affection that the listening public bestows. There is no greater accomplishment that one could hope for

- Lalgudi Jayaraman

Lasting memories of Lalgudi Jayaraman

Rajashree Yoganand, Bangalore

The above endearing photo makes us take a trip back in time. SRLKM was then located in Tata Silk Farm, Basavanagudi. The Institute was at its prime, when music classes would be held all day till late in the evening. The Institute which was also their house used to reverberate with the pupils learning Karnatic vocal, veena, violin and mridangam.

Many of the legends of Karnatic music have visited SRLKM and have blessed it wholeheartedly. To name a few like Dr. Balamurali Krishna, Parur Sundaram Iyer and his son MS Gopalakrishnan, Tanjore Upendran, Vellore Ramabhadran, KJ Yesudas, Maharajapuram Santhanam, Semmanugudi Sreenivasa Iyer, Dr. ML Vasanthakumari, veena S Balachander, Chitti Babu, Lalgudi Jayaraman and many other musicians of repute.

Lalgudi with his command and superlative playing of the violin was already a well known name in the music circles. He was very glad to visit

the institute. In his honour, the pupils of the Institute gave a Pancha veena and vocal performance, which was very much appreciated by him. He lauded the Institute saying that he could foresee a bright future for it.

The photo was taken in the front courtyard. Standing next to him (Lalgudi Jayaraman) are the founder sisters of the Institute, Karnataka Kalashree Vid. GV Ranganayakamma, Vid. GV Neela and their younger sister DR.GV Vijayalakshmi. Vid.GV Krishnaprasad, secretary SRLKM is also seen standing next to him along with violin vidwan MS Govindaswami who was his pupil. He talked and mingled with everyone much to their delight. He exemplified the saying “there is great beauty in simplicity”. That was Lalgudi sir.

The memory of the moment is still very fresh and green, etched in the mind of Sri.GV Krishnaprasad.



Soliloquy of an Accompanist



Dr. Mysore Manjunath, Mysore



Among all the art forms, music is considered to be the most effective medium for communicating and creating a mood of instant bliss and aesthetic joy in the listener through its melodic, harmonic and rhythmic contents. Of all the different musical instruments prevalent in our country in the past several centuries, Violin, though is a recent entry to Indian music, has grown in status by leaps and bounds to occupy a place of prime importance. In south India, a large number of great violinists have given lustre to the art of violin playing thus making it an indispensable instrument on concert stage.

Style in music, as in the other arts is the mode or method of expressing the art in a distinctive and intrinsic manner. There is not a single, definitely established way of playing a given music, for there is no absolute standard of beauty by which the presentation of an art work can be judged. A type of playing extravagantly admired and cultivated in one period and place, may be all together rejected in another. The general aesthetic sense and sensibility of the period in which we ourselves live, our own contemporary feeling for what is true and acceptable in musical style is the only standard of judgment to which we can refer the artist's interpretation. The personal character of violinist's physical and musical endowment, his genius, technical

virtuosity, temperament and musical perception along with the very nature of the instrument itself compel the violinist to express music in an individualistic manner manifesting an unique distinctive character.

In karnatic music, the role of a violin accompanist, is of paramount importance. The art of accompaniment covers a vast compass, where in the merit of the accompanist is determined by a number of qualities. The violinist's duties are multifarious and their true fulfilment poses a challenge of the highest order.

One of the all time great violinists, supremely skilled accompanist with thousands of concerts performed with many generations and whose participation illumined and enhanced schools of musicians, Lalgudi Jayaraman has great accomplishments to his credits, which are quite formidable in themselves. He brought a new perception to the role of violin accompaniment in Karnatak music which probably went beyond his expectations itself. As a violinist, he demonstrated the application of his unmatched powers of musicianship, superb technicalities, observation, analysis and experimentation which contributed to the substantial improvement in the technique of playing the instrument projecting Karnatak music effectively. He is always remembered for taking the art of violin accompaniment to the great heights. He forged striking innovations and renewed the bases of tradition. His imaginative essays were always anchored within the definitive ramparts of tradition.

While accompanying, only a few violinists like Lalgudi could bring out a stamp of authority and their individualistic playing style during accompaniment. For Lalgudi, violin evolved to be more than 'just' an accompaniment. Though he did 'follow' the 'main artists' music, his interpreta-



Lalgudi Jayaraman accompanying Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer at Sree Ramaseva Mandali, Fort High School, Chamarajpet, Bangalore with Vellore Ramabhadran on mridangam. Semmangudi is supported by his disciples Palai Ramachandran and V Subrahmaniam

tions of musical expression & ideas would create such a remarkable melodic - intellectual subtleties that many times inspired the main artists themselves, who in turn would repeat the same ideas while listeners wondered who was following whom! I was immensely fascinated by his amazing skills of transforming a poor melodic phrase sung by a vocalist in to a completely classical idiom within the parameters of the grammar!

It is quite fascinating to see how the main characteristic feature of Jayaraman's technique such as his handling gamakas, application of modulation - of both finger and bow pressure, sensible usage of vibratos, birgas and other ornamentations like Janti swara, Datu swara, pratyahata etc superbly equipped him on the stage leading to his great success as an accompanist. And of course his exceptional brilliance, musicianship and great expertise in the mathematics applied musical ideas set him as one of the great violin accompanists in Karnatic music.

In his accompaniment concerts, it is a sheer joy to listen to his manipulation of gamaka with different degree of intensity, temper and range which decorate each musical phrase with precision. He excelled in his accompaniment for the rendition of compositions sung by various mu-

sicians belonging to different patanthara! He needed no time in assessing and analysing the capacity, style and mood of any artist he accompanied. his flexible style and tremendous knowledge of each component of Karnatic Music, be it Raga, Thala, Sahithya, neraval, Thana, Pallavi made him accompany any musician with great ease! In his hands, vocal effects seem to get so perfectly translated into instrumental terms. He treated technical skills only as a means to project the chaste music of the Karnatic system and also to give expression to his own musical ideas. He never attempted to project technical virtuosity for its own sake during accompaniment. And every bit of his expressions seems to be well within the confines of pure Karnatic tradition.

Faithfully following the main artiste, buttressing the concert with his creative inputs, Lalgudi enthused the other artistes too. Without intruding on the singer's creative flow, his is a understated, but nevertheless powerful presence on stage. Whether it was the complex mathematics of the Alathur Brothers or the slow- meditative style of M D Ramanathan, the extra ordinary flourishes of GNB or the effusive flow of Ramani's swaras, the twists and turns of Balamurali's raga essays or the complex and clueless creative melodies of Kalyanaraman,



Lalgudi Jayaraman accompanying BN Suresh at The Bangalore Gayana Samaja's 18th Music Conference with Karaikudi R Mani on Mridangam and G Harishankar on Kanjari (Photo courtesy The Bangalore Gayana Samaja)

Lalgudi has seen them all. No one can deny the fact that innumerable concerts got lifted up and saw success because of Lalgudi's accompaniment. Not surprisingly, all the leading musicians preferred to have him as their accompanist. On the contrary few renowned musicians not being able to match his caliber, scared & avoided having him as an accompanist, fearing he would steal their show on stage! This ill mind set unfortunately lead to the celebration of mediocrity, misleading the audience & drastically bringing down the artistic quality of the concerts many times.

Lalgudi always believed in the importance of an accompanist in a concert. For him Karnatic music was everything and Violin was his choicest instrument to explore in the vast sacred ocean of Music. He was lucky to be born in the age when the real musicianship and caliber of an accompanist alone mattered and was immensely respected. The world of music mourned when the master of the violin who lived his entire life for violin & Karnatic music, finally stopped playing in 2013. But his music continues to inspire eternally.

TAS Mani Passes away



Senior Mridangam Vidwan TAS Mani passed away on Saturday 14 March 2020 when he was enjoying the Pallavi competition organised by SRLKM. He was 84. He was a student of Vid. CK Ayyamani.

He blossomed into one the most sought after mridangam player accompanying the legends like Chambai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Mysore T Chowdaiah, Chintalapalli Ramachandra Rao, Veena Doreswamy Iyengar, RK Srikantan, A Subba Rao, DK Pattammal, MS Subbulakshmi, ML Vasanthakumari etc. He was a great teacher and trained many students under his Karnataka College of Percussion and managed it for over 50 years along with his wife RA Ramamani.

His demise is a great loss to Karnatic Music. We extend our deepest sympathies to the bereaved family. May his soul rest in peace.

Srimathi Brahmanandam on Lalgudi Jayaraman



Anuradha Sridhar, California, USA
(on behalf of her mother Srimathi Brahmanandam)

Lalgudi lineage is probably one of the most illustrious among the Saint Thyagaraja lineage with Sri. Lalgudi Rama Iyer being a direct disciple of the 'Thyagabrahmam'. Lalgudi Jayaraman along with Srimathy Brahmanandam, Padmavathy Ananthagopalan and Lalgudi Rajalakshmi have been the significant contributors to the lineage in our time frame. Srimathi Brahmanandam narrates her experience growing up in Lalgudi family and her concert experience with the genius Lalgudi Jayaraman.

1) Please narrate your experience learning Violin under Shri. VR Gopala Iyer.

I hail from a lineage that traces back to Saint Thyagaraja himself. My initial guru was my father (Appa) Sri. Valadi Gopal Iyer. He followed a strict Gurukula tradition steeped in discipline and classism. I started this rigorous training under him from the age of five. The one-point focus of his training was for us to master all skills and aspects needed to excel in playing the violin and become complete musicians. This involved hours of training round the clock that was critical to aligning body, mind, and soul to the intricate nuances of ragas, the minute details of kritis, and the complicated patterns of talas. I did not have the luxuries of going to school or playing with other children. Appa would start bowing the violin at 4:30 a.m. and that was our wake up call. My mother would give us Ragi malt (a milk based drink) in the morning and we would start practice from 5 a.m. and continue all morning until lunch with a break for bath and a simple yet hearty breakfast of buttermilk with rice soaked overnight in water. In the afternoon, post lunch, we would spend time writing music and reviewing lessons from the previous day. Between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. we were taught vocal

lessons and from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. we would practice violin again.

During occasional breaks between practices, Appa would play carrom board, solve riddles, or build puzzles with us. These were played with the same seriousness and attention as the music lessons and was a way of developing mind strength, focus, and fine motor skills. From 8 p.m to 9 p.m. Appa would have a Thirupugazh bhajan session which was attended by all family members. The day would conclude with dinner. This meticulous and diligent training day after day for years, laid a strong foundation in music for me. Later, I was trained by Anna (my brother) Lalgudi Sri. G. Jayaraman.

2) Could you please comment on the practice sessions that you used to have with Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman

Anna was already an established artist by the time I started playing with him. He was eleven years my senior. He was already performing when I was born. Every day we had endless practice sessions and there was hardly any time for anything else. There would not be any planned list of songs. Anna would pick any piece on the spot and I would have to play with him. While we were performing concerts once every few days, for me, every practice session was like a concert. Whether we played at home or outside, it had the same rigour, seriousness, and challenges. Only for certain important high profile concerts he would tell with me where we will play kalpana swaras etc. Most concerts were done on the spot. The practice sessions were very serious with no distractions of any kind.

Anna also trained me to be prepared for any concert at any time. He would constantly intro-



Lalgudi Jayaraman and Srimathi Brahmanandam being accompanied by Palghat Mani Iyer on Mridangam (Undated file photo of a concert at Little Hut Hall, Hotel Ashoka, Egmore, Chennai)

duce new ideas and new pallavis during our practises. I would learn these very quickly and thoroughly. He would teach me new compositions. I maintained good hand written records of the composition and concerts and was always ready to meet his challenges.

Since Anna was particular that the violin sounded like or even better than the vocal, we would rehearse the sahithyam (words) vocally several times - so that when we played the violin one could actually hear the sahithyam bhavam for compositions.

In a nutshell, practice sessions with Anna were priceless and I learned so much - to respond effectively to his brilliant imagination on the fly so that he is inspired to further his ideas. Raga bhava, rigour of execution, strong hold on layam, a thorough grooming on stage performance aspects and much more were the lessons learned.

3) Your comments on some of the great violin concerts with your brother

Every concert of Anna was phenomenal. It is actually difficult to pick. Even if the songs were repeated in some concerts, the way he would handle the song and the manodharma would be completely different in each rendition.

My first violin duet with Anna was on Dec 17 1958 at an Ayyappa Utsavam in old part of Chennai. Sri SVS Narayanan was on the mridangam and KM Vaidhyathanan Ghatam. The concert happened from 10 pm till 12:30 past mid-

night. As we started to play together more and more concerts, the concert halls would be overflowing. The rasikas started looking forward to these duets. Soon we started getting more concert opportunities from other sabhas all over the country and we performed several concerts every month.

Normally in those days, Palghat Mani Iyer would not accompany female artists. I recall at an Alathur Brothers' concert once. Anna was to accompany them on violin. However, one of the brothers fell sick and informed Anna and Palghat Mani Iyer about it. Palghat Mani Iyer suggested that Anna play a solo instead of canceling the concert and that he would accompany him on the mridangam. Anna broached the delicate subject of my presence on stage. "If you want me to play, my sister would play as well. Do you mind?" Palghat Mani Iyer graciously replied: "Not at all, go ahead and play the concert with your sister". Until then Palghat Mani Iyer had not accompanied female artists. This led to several legendary concerts accompanied by this great doyen of mridangam.

Every New Year's day we had a concert at Balasubramania Sangeetha Sabha which was well attended and looked forward too. Many great concerts were performed at Krishna Gana Sabha, T Nagar, Chennai. I recall our concert of 1967 at this venue, and the recording of this concert was also released a few years back.



Srimathi Brahmanandam duet concert with Lalgudi Jayaraman with Umayalpuram Sivaraman on Mridangam and Vinayakram on Ghatam

The 1965 season concert (23-12-1965) at the Music Academy was a memorable one. Those days, the concert started at 9 pm and went on till past midnight. The auditorium was overflowing with people. There was hardly any space to walk. It was a memorable night and I remember how people did not leave the hall until the end. I also recall the time we performed at the Music College in Chennai and the veteran vocalist Sri. Musiri Subramania Iyer, appreciated our performance a lot in his speech following the concert. Another incident I recall is a concert with Anna in Masulipattinam, Andhra Pradesh. A rasika from the audience presented us with huge silver baskets, overwhelmed with emotions. There are many such memories to cherish.

4) Could you comment on the concert planning of Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman?

We practiced generally with a single minded focus. We had a vast repertoire of songs Anna has polished, beautified and imparted to me. As we practiced, he would pick the appropriate compositions for every concert. Choice of the right mix of songs was very critical for him. This was taken very seriously and every melodic and rhythmic variety was kept in mind as lists were created. Utmost diligence was shown to include compositions of Trinity and especially Saint Tyagaraja. Showing contrasts of ragas with varied notes and a myriad of talas was critical. Anna would think deeply on the combinations to include. The choice of songs he picked for a concert would leave the rasikas with a feeling of complete satisfaction.

Having said that, every concert was evolving till the end and very spontaneous in its own way. For a 6 p.m. show our practices would go on till 5:00 p.m. Even at the last minute, Anna would introduce new pallavi and sometimes even on stage. I was trained to be extremely focused to respond to his creativity which had no bounds. I would try to respond in a way to inspire him to create more.

5) Could you recount the Friday musical sessions that used to happen at your house? How intense was it?

When it was first decided that I would be Anna's violin duet partner, I was sixteen years old. I was trained extensively by my father until that point with enormous practice and great control over laya. But concert training and responding to the genius of my brother were new skills. So every Friday around 3 p.m a mock concert practice was arranged in our house. We sat at the altar in the pooja room in the presence of my father. A good family friend Mr. Mani Iyer, who was a ghatam vidwan was very happy to accompany us during these sessions. These sessions were actually played like full concerts. Although they were very intense as Anna would introduce new compositions and new ideas, they would be very exciting for me. A few neighbours and close friends listened to these weekly sessions.

Abhishek Raghuram on Lalgudi Jayaraman



Abhishek Raghuram, Chennai

Could you please comment on the relationship that existed for decades, between Sri Palghat Raghu and Sri LGJ?

Lalgudi mama and my grandfather are like two gigantic yet intricate Gopurams of the same temple.

Their musical journeys happened around the same timeline and since they shared the stage on innumerable occasions musically they influenced each other to a great extent. The way they could anticipate one another's musical response on stage was a joy for the listeners. Vidwan GN Balasubramaniam apparently acknowledged these two masters as his two eyes. They have even traveled extensively and widely together for concerts which gave them opportunities to have long conversations on music and exchange ideas and so on.

On a deeper level their expression of music is like two sides of the same coin. The way they have surrendered to the music and the manner in which they have assimilated music from various sources of their inspirations has found expression in both Lalgudi Mama's Varnams and Tillanas and my grandfather's rhythmic compositions and ideas.

Would you like to speak about your experiences singing before Sri LGJ, interacting with him etc?

The single minded focussed conversations that I was fortunate to have with Lalgudi mama which were strictly centered around music were enlightening and inspiring experiences for me, giving me a fresh perspective of the music every time. He always encouraged and has egged me on to create more original content.

Manodharma sangeetam according to him was something that needn't be curbed as it would

take its natural course. For Lalgudi mama music was not just an art form but it was a way of living.

Your comments on how Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman inspired your art and creativity

The nadopasaka that Lalgudi Sir is, there are many things that are inspiring during the journey of this phenomenon.

An university of Lakshana and Lakshya, the way he has configured the grammar of this music, the way he has deeply introspected his own music and evolved, thereby entering uncharted territories and redefining boundaries, shows us the greatness and the magnificence of this system. As a student, it is our duty to analyse his contributions and incorporate it into our individual styles.

Your comments on some of the related thematic renditions eg. Lalgudi Samarpanam in Jan 2014 on Margazhi Maha Utsavam, Lalgudi Pancharatnam and its recording etc.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity of learning Lalgudi Sir's musical creations through his family members and students.

By virtue of listening to his recordings I was inspired to sing a lot of material that he either popularised or conceived.

Lalgudi samarpanam for Margazhi Maha Utsavam, Lalgudi pancharatnam album for Charsur and the most interesting and recent one being Guru Vandanam with Vidushi Bombay Jayashri are some of the tributes that I have been privileged to be a part of.

All these are moments of deep reverence for the great master.

Valmiki Ramayana in Sapta Raaga, Sapta Taala

*Based on a programme at The Bangalore Gayana Samaja, 1998
Recording Courtesy: The Bangalore Gayana Samaja*

It is widely known that Vidwan Sri Lalgudi G Jayaraman, as a vaggeyakaara (composer of music and lyrics) has contributed gems of varnams, tillanas, kritis to the carnatic world. As a composer with rare poetic vision, he has portrayed the artha-bhaava of Saahityam (meaning of the lyrics of a musical composition) by means of musical aspects and movements. Sri Lalgudi himself has referred to this aspect, on various occasions, as musical choreography. Remarkably, even his chitta swaras (composed passages comprising purely of musical notes or swaras, which fall into the realm of absolute music) have often portrayed the artha-bhaava of the associated composition, in addition to being rich with musical aesthetics and intricacies.

This article covers his contribution as a 'geyakaara' (composer of music for pre-existing poetry) for the immortal Sanskrit verses from the Ramayana. He was requested to compose music to seven kaanda-s (काण्ड) of the Ramayana using seven ragas and seven suladi taalas, given the theme of 'seven' for the associated dance programme by renowned dance exponent Smt. Chitra Visweswaran.

The chosen verses are in the anushtubh chandas (metrical form) with eight syllables for every paada (quarter) of the verse. It is known that suladi taalas have different number of beats. His musical genius has mapped the said eight syllables of every paada to the appropriate number of beats in each of the chosen taalas, chosen very appropriate Raagas, and used very apt musical phrases to portray the lyrical content. It can be observed that he has been sensitive to the anga-s of the taala, in terms of an-

choring salient portions of the chitta swaras as well as lyrical portions.

The following lines have been chosen to be akin to a pallavi or musical refrain (indicative of repeated salutations to Lord Raama) for this composition. This section has been sung with suitable musical modifications, for each raaga and taala as the Ramayana composition progresses.

आर्तानां आर्तिहन्तारं भीतानां भीतिनाशनम् ।
लोकाभिरामं श्रीराम भूयो भूयो नमाम्यहम् ॥

The remaining part of the composition has been organised into a chosen taala and raaga for each kaandam's chosen verses, followed by a chitta swara that starts in the slow tempo and elegantly transitions into the next speed, typically concluding with a makutam (a musical crown)

The opening Baala-kaandam has its music in Śankaraabharana Raaga and Chaturaśra jaati Dhruva taala. It comprises of the following verses that culminate in Seeta-swayamvara and subsequent wedding:

विश्वामित्रो ययावप्रे ततो रामो महायशः ।
काकपक्षधरो धन्वी तं च सौमित्रिरन्वगात् ॥

वत्स राम धनुः पश्य इति राघवमब्रवीत् ।
आरोपयत्स धर्मात्मा सलीलमिव तद्धनुः ॥

ततः सीतां समानीय सर्वाभरणभूषिताम् ।
अब्रवीज्जनको राजा कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनम् ॥

इयं सीता मम सुता सहधर्मचरी तव ।
प्रतीच्छ चैनां भद्रं ते पाणिं गृहीष्व पाणिना ॥

Rather than offering verse by verse translations, this article confines its scope to highlight a couple of musical contributions in each section, based on explanations from Sri Lalgudi himself.

The act of Sage Viśwamitra's leading the two youngsters who respectfully follow has been musically imaged by a striking start, with musical phrases around the upper shadjam to depict the sage preceptor who leads the youngsters. This contrasts phrasings for the young lads, who respectfully follow the preceptor, by virtue of musical notes employed softly and pliantly, in the middle octave that seemingly 'follow the leader', viz. the upper shadjam. The affectionate beckoning of young Raama (as "Vatsa Rama!", i. e. "My dear child, Rama !") to behold the bow of Lord Śiva has been imaged using a delicate, evocative musical phrasing around the dhaivata. The straightening of the bow has a striking musical movement, a quick and bold unfolding musical slide from Aadhaara shadjam to upper shadjam. The musical setting of the commencing words of the phrase "iyam seetaa mama suta, sahad-harmachari tava" (*this is my daughter Seeta, who will be your companion in Dharma*) has been explained to bring to mind the start of the traditional tune of "Seeta Kalyaanam". This experience is reinforced by the composer's inspiration from yet another custom in marriages. The chitta swara that follows the Saahityam concludes with the following segment, that neatly fits into the last 2 laghu-s of the taala:

Ř Š, Š,, Š,, - D P, P,, - MG, G,, - MGRSN ||
(Aartaanaam)

The composer's intent here is to remind us of a nagaswaram player's getti melam in a marriage, which uses jantai notes anchored on the upper shadja, panchama and gandhara.

Next follows Ayodhyaa-kaandam, whose music has been composed in Malayamaarutam Raaga, in Chaturaśra jaati Matya taala.

जयेष्टं श्रेष्ठगुणै-र्युक्तं प्रियं दशरथः सुतं ।

यौवराज्येन संयोक्तुमैच्छत्प्रीत्या महीपतिः ॥

पूर्वं दत्तवरा देवी वरमेनमयाचत ।

विवासनं च रामस्य भरतस्याभिषेचनम् ॥

स सत्यवचनाद् राजा धर्मपाशेन संयतः ।

विवासयामास सुतं रामं दशरथः प्रियम् ॥

The music in this Ayodhyaa-kaandam shows a contrast within its own section, in its emotive content. The music for this section begins on a sanguine note in keeping with the exalted qualities of Lord Raama, and his father's plan to make him the Yuvaraaja. The music assumes a melancholic character when it essays the turn of events. Due to a promise earlier made by him, Daśaratha was bound by commitment to truth, to honour Kaikeyi's demands. The said unreasonable demands were that her own son, Bharata be proclaimed as Yuvaraaja, and also that Raama should be sent on Vanavaasa (exile to forest). The verses' music here also use notes that gradually ascend and seem like going farther away, to depict Raama fading away into horizon beyond field of view, as also Dasaratha's own spirit ebbing away. The chitta swaras also depict this feeling of sorrow. The judicious use of plain notes (appropriately connected to some neighbouring notes with slides, but not with other heavier gamaka-s) at appropriate points also heightens the melancholic feel.

The subsequent Aranya-kaandam is in Raaga Saaramati and Chaturaśra jaati Roopaka Taala.

प्रविश्य तु महारण्यं रामो राजीवलोचनः ।

रम्यमावसथं कृत्वा तत्र च न्यवसत् सुखम् ॥

अपहर्तुं तदा सीतां रावणः कालचोदितः ।

जगाम सहमारीचः तस्याश्रमपदं प्रति ॥

Again, within this kaandam, the initial narrative of entering the mighty forest and spending some happy days, is contrasted in terms of musical emotion, with the subsequent abduction of Seeta by Raavana with the connivance of Maareecha. Sri Lalgudi mentions that the chitta swaras almost issue a plaintive appeal, as it were, to Raavana!

Š Ř Ğ Ğ Š D,,, - MPDNDMG,,, - SRGMGSĐ,,, -
R,G,M,, - P,DN,, - Š, Ř Ğ,, (Aartaanaam)

Indeed, the approach to the "komala swara-s" of saaramati, viz D,,, G,,, and D,,, by appropriate

musical movements with a glide from the note above, settling down with a gentle swing, in the symmetric phrases above, makes the listener perceive the intended emotion.

Raaga Hamsanaadam and Chaturaśra Jhampa taala are the choices of Sri Lalgudi for the Kishkindha-kaandam. The verses chosen are:

पम्पातीरे हनुमता सङ्गतो वानरेण ह ।

हनुमद्वचनाच्चैव सुग्रीवेण समागतः ॥

ततः सुग्रीववचनाद्धत्वा वालिनमाहवे ।

सुग्रीवमेव तद्राज्ये राघवः प्रत्यपादयत् ॥

स च सर्वान् समानीय वानरान् वानरर्षभः ।

दिशः प्रस्थापयामास दिदृक्षुर्जनकात्मजाम् ॥

The melody first halts at Nishaadam to heighten the expectation towards the important forthcoming event of Raama's meeting Sugreeva, whereupon the melody meets the shadjam. The resulting consonance hints at the sakhya-bhaava (friendship) between Raama and Sugreeva. As this section proceeds, small clusters of notes like NSR, SRM, RMP, used for the music of the verses, suggest the act of vaanara-s gathering one another by relaying messages between smaller groups, and then the entire congregation making a swift approach to central command by means of musical phrase that traverses into the higher octave and swiftly cascades to return downward. The chitta swara passage also has associated imagery of vaanara-s being sent in different directions in the search for Seeta.

The Sundara-kaandam that follows uses Ranjani raaga and Chaturaśra Triputa taala.

शतयोजनविस्तीर्णं पुप्लुवे लवणार्णवम् ।

तत्र लङ्कां समासाद्य पुरीं च हनुमान् बली ॥

ददर्श सीतां ध्यायन्तीमशोकवनिकां गताम् ।

समाश्वास्य च वैदेहीमभिज्ञानं न्यवेदयत् ॥

The expanse of the ocean (“*Śatayojanavisteeranam*”) has been indicated thoughtfully by a musical phrase that unfolds in length as well as in terms of musical detail. The powerful leap of Anjaneya uses the cascading brisk swaras

SRGMDŚRĠMĠMĠGŚ in the word ‘*pupluve*’, whose melodic contour indeed images a leap. The word ‘*samaśvaasya*’ is imaged by a musical phrase that conveys the necessary reassurance given to Seeta by Hanumaan, accompanied by the submission of Raama’s signet ring (Abhij-naana). The chitta swara passage musically depicts Hanumaan’s search for Seeta (before his spotting her). In addition to usual search patterns, the music envisions his search by means of jumps, which also manifests in the musical contour traced by phrases such as MDMDŚN, -M,N, MNDMG (and its preceding symmetric phrase). The finish of the chitta swara signals that the search is successfully complete and he has found her - musically linear movements accordingly are used as contrast, in the concluding makutam for the chitta swaram passage, as indicated below.

SRGMDŚRĠ Ś,, - ŚNDMGSRG S,,, - SRGMDŚRĠ
|| (Aartaanaam)

The Yuddha-kaandam uses Vasanta Raaga in Chaturaśra Ata

ततः सुग्रीवसहितो कृत्वा सेतुं महोदधौ ।

तेन गत्वा पुरीं लङ्कां हत्वा रावणमाहवे ॥

तामुवाच ततो रामः परुषं जनसंसदि ।

अमृष्यमाणा सा सीता विवेश ज्वलनं सती ॥

ततोऽग्निवचनात् सीतां ज्ञात्वा विगतकल्मषाम् ।

नन्दिग्रामे जटां हित्वा भ्रातृभिस्सहितो नघः

रामः सीतामनुप्राप्य राज्यं पुनरवाप्तवान् ॥

The word ‘*Setu*’, a bridge, has been musically imaged by jaaru or slide bridging the aadhaara shadja to the higher octave shadja. The word ‘*parusham*’ (harsh), has found echo in its musical depiction. The thoughtful use of plain notes at chosen points in this section heightens the emotive appeal.

Before the last kaandam, the following verse indicated below have been rendered in a free-flowing style (without taala) in Anandabhairavi.

वामे भूमिसुता पुरश्च हनुमान् पश्चात् सुमित्रासुतः

शत्रुघ्नो भरतश्च पार्श्वदलयोः वाय्वादिकोणेषु च ।

सुग्रीवश्च विभीषणश्च युवराट् तारासुतो जाम्बवान्
मध्ये नीलसरोजकोमलरुचिं रामं भजे श्यामलम् ॥

The following from Uttara-kaandam have been
tuned in Raaga Sri, in chaturaśra Eka taala.

ततः स प्रयतो वृद्धो वसिष्ठो ब्राह्मणैः सह ।
रामं रत्नमये पीठे सहसीतं न्यवेशयत् ॥

वसिष्ठो वामदेवश्च जाबालिरथ काश्यपः ।
अभ्यषिञ्चन् नरव्याघ्रं सलिलेन सुगन्धिना ॥

तस्य चैवागमं रामः काव्यस्य श्रोतुमुत्सुकः ।
पप्रच्छ तौ महातेजाः तावुभौ मुनिदारकौ ॥

किंप्रमाणमिदं काव्यं का प्रतिष्ठा महात्मनः ।
कर्ता काव्यस्य महतः क्व चासौ मुनिपुङ्गवः ॥

पृच्छन्तं राघवं वाक्यं ऊचतुर्मुनिदारकौ ।
वाल्मीकिर्भगवान् कर्ता सम्प्राप्तो यज्ञसंविधम् ॥
येनेदं चरितं तुभ्यं अशेषं सम्प्रदर्शितम् ।

The abhishekam of Lord Raama employs a musically evocative phrase for 'salilena' which conveys the act of anointing the Lord with scented water. The Raaga is an apt choice since musically,

it heralds auspiciousness. The gentle question which Lord Raama poses Lava and Kuśa when they sing the verses of Ramayana before Him, 'kim pramaanam idam kaavyam' (an enquiry on the scope, extent and measure of this kaavya) also ends in a gentle musical inflection on Nishaadam that is reminiscent of a gentle question.

Valmiki Ramayana is an integral part of every household's life, worship and psyche. This contribution of Sri Lalgudi, in composing music and making the music tell the story of Ramayana - using select verses from Ramayana that provide its gist and incorporating exemplary chitta swara passages - is yet another musical gem that he has bestowed to the world of classical music and dance.

Editor's comment:

SRLKM obtained a recording of this lec-dem courtesy 'The Bangalore Gayana Samaja' and shared it with the following individuals whose efforts it acknowledges.

Article authored by: Shailesh Ramamurthy

Verses compiled by: HS Sudharshan and Mrs Rajani Arjun Shankar, Chennai.

Team 'Pallavi Sammela' successfully completed the two day Pallavi Sammela competition at the Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira on 13th and 14th March. Sitting from Left to Right - Dr. Shertalai KN Ranganatha Sharma, TS Satyavathi, GV Krishna Prasad, KU Jayachandra Rao, HS Sudhindra (who co-ordinated the event)



Lalgudi Sir as I remember



KS Raghunathan (HMV Raghu), Chennai

I am nearing 85 and 75 years of listening to Lalgudi Personal friendship from 1950's as admirers of My Guru GN Sir and later from mid of 60s till millennium my experiences of recording him for LPs Cassettes/CDs, have all created a cumulus of a beneficiary of his compassion with his exceptional and outstanding commitment to Classical music both as a violinist (accompaniment and solo) composer of incredible Varnas, Kritis, RTPs and Tillanas and not but not the least his valuable contribution towards spreading the essentials of tradition and posterity through a society of disciples which included his sisters Srimathi, Rajalaxmi and son Maestro GJR Krishnan and Smt. Vijayalaxmi Srinivasan the SPARK of the family tree.

From his school days till his primes as an accompanying artiste Lalgudi has played to almost all vocalists, Veena (S Balachander) and other instrumentalists. His following with Madurai Mani Iyer, Alathur Brothers, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Madurai Somu, KVN, Ramnad Krishnan, my Father in law Sangeetha Kalanidhi Dr. S Ramanathan and the INDEFATIGABLE playing for GN Sir for many years are all memorable for many years.

To remember a few of how my Guru acknowledged his merit was observed in a Radio recording for AIR Ranchi which was supervised by him (My Guru). Sri Lalgudi played with Srimathi a Dharmavathi Krithi and after recording was over he was accrediting Lalgudi for his

Undated file photo of S Balachander accompanied by Lalgudi Jayaraman on Violin and Palani Subramania Pillai on Mridangam at Sree Ramaseva Mandali, Fort High School, Chamarajpet, Bangalore.



knowledge as "Yenna Budhhi! "Though many violinists have accompanied GN Sir, his favourite was Lalgudi and he used to ask for his availability and then only choose the next. We became very close friends after my entry to HMV from All India radio and every recording was an event of unforgettable experience. This was because Gramophone Vinyl Discs were prestigious products and as an editor, I was performing best in Chennai. Sri Lalgudi gave utmost importance to my knowledge and exploited the best of my abilities to bring out BLEMISHLESS music. During 70s, I recorded many Varnas, Tillanas which were composed by him and he used to encourage me to perform them when I used to sing for Cutcheris. He used to take some notebook in my machine room and write the notated version of Nalinakanthi Varnam. In a Krishna Gana Sabha annual publication I wrote about his penchant to play 'Ninnu Cheppa kaaranamemi manasa' in Mandhaari as the correct version unlike others who sing 'ranamemi' as a separate sahithya.

His bringing out Cheyyoor Chengalvarayo Sastri's compositions, Lalgudi Pancharatnams and music for National TV channels and movie also have always been of exceptional merits. His 'Naa jeevadhara' is a challenge to many vocalists who are yet to bring out the essence of the composition. I could sing it only once with SD Sreedhar on violin after rigorous practice with LP and rehearsing at home before I sat on the dais.

Madurai Somu has shared with me an appreciation that 'Naan ELLU endru pada arambichaaley YENNAI kku ready endru terivikkum Orey Maedhai namma Lalgudi' Once he accompanied Mudikondan Venkatramier for a SIMHANANDANAM RTP in Music Academy and Venkatramier said Lalgudi 'pakkathile utkaarnda Namma Dhairyama paadalaam' (if Lalgudi sits by our side, we can sing confidently).

His first LP with violin-Venu-Veena was recorded during my training of HMV Calcutta as the first stereophonic album and along with Mr. Sen the senior recordist. I also assisted. After Mohana Rama and Thani, his Behag Thillaana was recorded. The entire Studio engineers (mostly

Bengalis) were in a trance and expressed their appreciation with a standing ovation. Such is his glory.

I have learnt from my first GURU in Tirupathi, called Sonti Narayana Rao, the grandson of Sonti Venkataramanayya the Guru of Thyagabrahmam. Sri. Narayana Rao had taught me to adhere to the sahithyas of Thyagabrahmam, AND I realised the puritanism ONLY through Lalgudi Sir when he played ANY Thyagaraja Swamy krithi, This proved his self recognition as the parampara representative of Thyagabrahmams successors for music.

Sri. KV Mahadevan told me that Producer AP Nagarajan asked him to meet Lalgudi to compose for Kapi Raga Thillana in the Movie "Tillana Mohanambal" and Sri KVM met Lalgudi and requested him to set the tune. Today we all realise that the movie has become a legend by the contribution of Sri. Lalgudi. Many more events can be expressed like this. Long live his name and fame and his compositions which are sung by todays maestros.

(Shri. Raghunath popularly called HMV Raghu learnt music under Sonti Narayana Rao, the grandson of Sonti Venkataramanayya the Guru of Sadguru Thyagaraja and later on from GN Sir. He joined AIR in 1958 subsequently joined HMV in 1967. He is credited with recording yesteryears greats like MS Subbulakshmi, ML Vasanthakumari, Lalgudi Jayaraman, Dr. Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna. He is also the man behind the old recording of Balamuralikrishna playing Viola, Mridangam all in one recording. He can be reached at hmvraghu@gmail.com)

Guru par excellence - a shishya's journey



Vid. Shankari Krishnan, Chennai, Senior disciple of Lalgudi Jayaraman

Music is akin to a fond mother who has many sons and daughters. One such worthy son, whom any mother would be proud of, is the great legend Guru Lalgudi Shri G Jayaraman. He was a person who made Music proud with his calibre, creativity and dedication. A musical phenomenon with a divine perception, he was ever willing to learn and assimilate like a true Sishya but at the same time was a Guru par excellence who motivated his sishyas to excel. I have been fortunate beyond measure to have been his disciple for more than two decades. He was a task master yet a compassionate Guru. Lalgudi



Sir has not only been a maestro of music who disseminated music with passion but also a living example of how to lead life with dignity, creativity, sense of humour and poise in each aspect of everyday existence. The power of his personality and the intensity to mould his disciples in all aspects of life including embellishing musical qualities has been so immense that it is difficult to express in words. He was humility personified and he would always consider himself a senior disciple and all of us as junior disciples. He loved Nature and would emphasise that all that we call as creativity is nothing compared to benevolent Nature and that we were mere bubbles in the Cosmos. His childlike qualities enmeshed with a subtle sense of humour, strict discipline, moral code of conduct and penchant for quality remain etched in my life. On the musical front, his teachings made me comprehend that every element that beautifully enlivens music should be in the right measure. Moreover it has also enabled me to lead a life of poised balance with greater focus where nothing should go awry on account of attitudinal glitch.

Coming to the experiences as his sishya, what is dear to my heart is the day he took me as his disciple. He, through his Lalgudi Trust, was encouraging meritorious students to pursue education by scholarships and I had approached him for such a scholarship while I was studying in the University of Madras. When I was asked to sing a 'kriti' by the great legend, with great trepidation, I sang "Sreenivasa tava charanau" in Karaharpriya. To my greatest delight he not only sanctioned scholarship but also took me as his disciple. With tears of joy I thanked God for this



Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman with his wife Rajamma along with his students at his house on the occasion of his eightieth birthday function on 17 September 2010

grace. It has been a blissful journey from that moment onwards.

During the course of this musical journey, he would always insist on the need to be alert to every minute detail that would enhance the presentation, in addition to appropriate concert plan, voice production, mike management, posture and stage decorum. Also, irrespective of whether or not there were concerts to be rendered, he would insist that we should equip ourselves well so that when an opportunity presented itself, one would be ready to grab it and perform optimally and aesthetically. He would also be keen to make us review our own concert and list out the shortcomings in order to get over the same. Also, one important trait of his that has inspired me to follow is that he had documented every detail of each of his concerts and suggested that we follow suit. Another of his remarkable facets was that he often highlighted only the positive aspects of musicians be it senior or fledging and at no point of time he would talk ill of them. Musicality of a person was the only thing that would appeal to him. In this way, he would goad us to imbibe the best. The most endearing aspects that distinguished him as a great Guru are many which cannot be described in words. Nevertheless the most appealing and everlasting aspects are depicted herein.

Lalgudi Sir is well known for his punctuality and would expect his sishyas to be in time whether it was for learning or performing. His penchant for saahitya s'udham would be evident always. As a dedicated Guru, his intense sincerity would stand out whenever he would endeavour to get the perfection of his choice from his students in every nuance even at the most micro level apart from his focus on the aspects of 'bhaavam' 'paatantara s'udham', 'raaga bhaavam', 'artha bhaavam' (emotion of the lyrics), 'laya s'udham' and 'kaalapramaana s'udham'. His famous pataantaram, evolved after vast research by him, is well known not only for its beauty in complexity but also for its sharply chiselled nuances, demanding a lot of disciplined and intent practice and perfection for students to absorb. His emphasis on sense of proportion, be it in the realm of s'udha swara phrases or gamaka phrases, has had a great impact on me that even to this day whenever I try to perfect a rendition, this aspect would always come to the fore. Moreover he would insist that while singing a raaga aalapana, the 'raaga swarupam' should be delineated right at the opening phrase itself.

Thus in all respects, to me he has been a Nada Yogi and being his disciple has been the greatest privilege of my life which I cherish forever.

GV Krishna Prasad honoured

Birth Centenary of Padmabhushan and Sangeetha Kalanidhi Dr. RK Srikantan
was held on 21 January 2020 at Chowdiah memorial hall.

Shri. GV Krishna Prasad, Hon. Secretary of Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira
was presented with Centenary Felicitation.



Left to Right -Vidwan RS Ramakanth, Cleveland Shri. VV Sundaram, Dr. Rajkumar Upadhyaya, Additional
Director General of Doordarshan and AIR Prasar Bharati, R. Subbaraj Urs, Chairman, Academy of Music,
Dr. MRV Prasad, President Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Dr. Raghavendra, Ananya Cultural Academy,
Shatavadhani Ganesh

Sitting - GV Krishna Prasad, Hon. Secretary Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira

Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira

Founders Day Celebrations - 2020

07 May, 2020

Raga Laya Prabha Award Function

Thursday, 5.30 pm

Venue: The Bangalore Gayana Samaja

The award function will be held in the presence of Sri Sri Sri Yathiraja Narayana Ramanuja Jeeyar and Dr. TS Sathyavathy will be the Chief Guest.

Raga Laya Prabha Award will be presented to Smt. Anjali Sriram, Dr. SV Sahana, Heramba and Hemantha, Apoorva Krishna and A Radhesh. The Award function will be followed by the Veena Concert by Dr. SV Sahana accompanied on Mridanga by A Radhesh and Anoor Sunad on Khanjira.

08 May, 2020

Friday, 5.30 pm

Venue: The Bangalore Gayana Samaja

Kunnakudi M Balamurali Krishna (Vocal), HK Venkatram (Violin), KU Jayachandra Rao (Mridanga), Prof. GS Ramanujan (Ghatam)

09 May, 2020

Saturday,

5.30 to 7.00 pm

Venue: The Bangalore Gayana Samaja

Anagha Yoganand (Vocal), Achyutha Rao (Violin), BS Prashanth (Mridanga), BS Raghunandan (Ghatam)

7.30 to 8.45 pm

Vishnu Venkatesh (Mandolin), Arjun Dinkar (Violin), Nikshith Puttur (Mridangam), NS Krishna Prasad (Ghatam).

10 May, 2020

Sangeetha Vedantha Dhurina Award Function

Sunday, 5.30 pm at The Bangalore Gayana Samaja

Sangeetha Kala Rathna Vid. Sri AV Anand will be conferred with the title, "Sangeetha Vedantha Dhurina" instituted in the name of visionary founder, G. Vedantha Iyengar with a cash award of Rs. 1,00,000, a Silver Medal and a Citation.

The Award function will be followed by a music concert by

OS Thyagarajan (Vocal), HK Narasimha Murthy (Violin), AV Anand (Mridanga), N Amruth (Khanjira)