

SANGEET MELA 2016

3rd Annual Indian Classical Music & Dance Festival

Saturday 3rd September

Queensland Multicultural Centre
Brisbane, Australia



Programme

Afternoon Session: 2:30pm to 4:30pm

1. SANGEET PREMI RISING STAR AWARD WINNERS:
 - a) VOCAL, VIOLIN and MRIDANGAM (Carnatic)
 - Ku Oaviya Bavanendrakumar
 - Ku Mathuja Bavanendrakumar
 - Sri Hariharan Vaheesan
 - b) VOCAL (Hindustani) – Ku Ananya Muralidharan
 - c) BHARATANATYAM DANCE – Ku Vellantina Ravirajah
2. TABLA SOLO – Sri Zuheb Ahmed Khan (Delhi)

~ Interval ~

Sunset Session: 4:45pm to 6:45pm

1. MOHINIATTAM DANCE – Smt Bindu Rajendren
2. VOCAL (Carnatic) – Smt Charulatha Mani (Chennai)
3. VOCAL (Hindustani) – Sri Sayak Bhattacharya (Sydney)

~ Interval ~

Evening Session: 7:30pm to 9:30pm

1. BHARATANATYAM DANCE
 - Ku Janani Ganapathi with live ensemble
2. SITAR-CELLO JUGALBANDI
 - Pt Shubhendra Rao and Smt Saskia Rao-de Haas (Delhi)

Please enjoy delicious refreshments in the lobby. No food to be brought into the auditorium. Please be seated in timely fashion and be considerate of fellow listeners.

Due to the extent of the programme we must run on time.

Please enter and leave the auditorium between items.

From the Festival Organisers



Festival Director

Shen Flindell (EthnoSuperLounge)

Welcome to our third annual Sangeet Mela, celebrating Indian classical culture by bringing together a selection of international, interstate and top local artists with our best young stars and a multitude of music lovers in convivial appreciation of the beauty of Raga and Tala, Nritya, Nritya and Natya. We even have patrons flying in from India to enjoy Sangeet Mela 2016.

As always, our Rising Star Award winners demonstrate the fabulous talent in our local community and give us hope for the future. I want to highlight the achievements of Mathuja Bavan who wins the award for Carnatic violin this year, following her award for Bharatanatyam dance last year.

After two years of developing live musical accompaniment for Kathak dance performances at Sangeet Mela, this year it's the turn of our local South Indian artists who will accompany Bharat Natyam dancer Janani Ganapathi. It's a lot of work bringing together so many artists to rehearse such intensive pieces and I'm happy that Sangeet Mela can create the incentive and opportunity for collaboration, and to present our local artists in such a high profile performance.

As always we'll be holding a tabla workshop tomorrow with our visiting tabla master, Sri Zuheb Ahmed Khan of Ajrara Gharana. This year we also have a Raga workshop with Pt Shubhendra Rao, followed by a special session on bowed instruments such as violin and cello with Smt Saskia Rao-de Haas. This is an excellent way for us to get into more direct contact with these accomplished musicians and get some inspiration for our own musical practice.

We are very grateful to Cr Jonathan Sri and The Gabba Ward for giving support through the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund, as well as our platinum sponsors SolarSpan, our silver sponsors, and also our underwriters who back the whole project up. Big thanks to our team of volunteers and performers and all of the music lovers who come to make Sangeet Mela such a success. I do hope you'll love this year's programme and welcome your feedback on how Sangeet Mela should grow in the future.

email: shen@sangeetmela.org



Sangeet Premi Club President

Yousuf Alikhan (Sangeet Premi Club)

It seems only yesterday when the idea for Sangeet Mela was conceived and after months of hard work, launched in this very auditorium. In a short space of three years the event has matured and grown in stature. It is now considered to be the premier Indian classical music and dance event in Australia attracting some well known proponents of Indian classical music and dance, and encompassing both Hindustani and Carnatic forms of classical music and dance.

We have over the past two years seen and experienced the brilliance of our local artists in conjunction with the mastery of renowned national and international artists. We have through the annual Rising Star Awards discovered some exceptional talent who are now making a mark on the Indian classical music and dance scene throughout Australia.

Sangeet Premi Club is proud to be part of this initiative to bring local, interstate and international artist together on this platform to showcase their exceptional skills and provide the Brisbane community with a performance to cherish throughout the year. On behalf of Sangeet Premi Club and its members, I would like to thank Cr. Jonathan Sri, the Gabba Ward and the Brisbane City Council for supporting the event through the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund. Our sincere gratitude to our sponsors and event underwriters and the band of loyal patrons who have supported the event since inception.

email: sangeetpremiclub@gmail.com

International Artists



Pt. Shubhendra Rao - sitar

Composer and performer, Pandit Shubhendra Rao is one of India's foremost musicians today. Distinguished as a musical bridge to many cultures, he creates an experience for his audience that "is not aimed at titillating the senses, but to seize the soul". A protégé of world-renowned Sitar maestro, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Shubhendra has established himself "not only as a master of his instrument but also as a thinking musician, constantly endeavouring to carry his instrument beyond conventional boundaries". His playing reminds the listener of the masters of yore transformed into today's era.

Shubhendra is one of the last musicians to learn his art in the true "Guru-Shishya Parampara", living with and learning from his Guru for over ten years. The maestro initiated his learning at the age of three with a first lesson when visiting him at his home in Bangalore. In the latter years, an important part of his learning was assisting his Guru in solo concerts and orchestras like 'Live in Kremlin' in Russia as well as the music theatre, 'Ghanashyam' and various other projects. Today, critics and connoisseurs have hailed Pandit Shubhendra Rao as a worthy successor to his illustrious Guru's tradition.



Smt Saskia Rao-de Haas - cello

Saskia Rao-de Haas is a brilliant cellist from the Netherlands. She is a pioneer in the world of music for introducing her Indian cello to North Indian classical music. Critics and audiences alike have praised her for her artistic depth and technical virtuosity. Saskia started to learn the cello at the age of eight under late Hungarian cello virtuoso Tibor de Machula. She studied cello at the conservatory of Rotterdam specializing in Indian classical music under Koustav Ray and Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia, while finishing her Master's in Ethnomusicology from the University of Amsterdam. During her subsequent visits to India she also studied

under eminent artistes such as Dr Sumati Mutatkar, Pt DK Datar, Pt Deepak Chowdhury and Pt Shubhendra Rao. With no precedent to follow, Saskia has worked with singular dedication to adapt the cello to Indian classical music.

Saskia's instrument, the Indian Cello, is a unique custom-made instrument to suit the requirements of Indian music, based on her comparative study of Indian string instruments and western baroque instruments. The Indian cello is smaller in size than its western counterpart and has 1 additional playing string and 10 sympathetic strings to give the cello a new dimension. Saskia's unique playing style enables her to bring out the subtleties and the embellishments characteristic of north Indian classical music. She has invented new techniques for the cello that allow her to nurture its inherent closeness to the human voice and explore unrestrained all its possibilities. At the Edinburgh festival, the press wrote that the Indian cello has a sound quality and expression that is 'unmatched by any other string instrument'.

International Artists



Smt Charulatha Mani - Carnatic vocal

Charulatha Mani is a leading Carnatic music vocalist and has a huge fan following in India and abroad. Gifted with a rich, melodious voice, and amazing creativity she has a vast repertoire of compositions of various genres, and this has made her one of the most popular and renowned artistes of today. She initially trained under her mother Smt Hemalatha Mani, Veena artiste, and later trained under vidwans Sri Sandhyavananam Srinivasa Rao, and Calcutta K. S. Krishnamurthy.

She regularly performs all over the globe, and has won several prestigious awards including the Yuva Kala Bharati from Bharat Kalachar, the Isai Kurasil from New Delhi and M S Subbulakshmi Endowment Award from Narada Gana Sabha, Chennai, Best Ragam Tanam Pallavi award from Krishna Gana Sabha.

Her Isai Payanam programmes have made her a crowd-puller. The way she instantly connects with her audience and feels their pulse has made her Isai Payanam videos a must in every music lover's home. In Isai Payanam she presents ragas in Classical and Film music with examples from Classical and Film genres exuding the melodic feel and the raga's innate beauty. Her raga segment presentations for Jaya TV started off the Isai Payanam trend which she later carried over to live performances.



Sri Zuheb Ahmed Khan - tabla

Zuheb Khan belongs to the famous Ajrada Gharana. He is the son of Ustad Naushad Ahmed Khan who is the fourth generation of musicians hailing from the gharana. Zuheb took his training from well known tabla player of Ustad Akram Khan and grand father Ustad Hashmat Ali Khan. The Ajrara Gharana, categorized as playing in the kinar baj, was founded in the nineteenth century. Clarity of sound is the hallmark of the gharana's playing style. The Ajrara gharana includes bol-patterns that are rather complicated with barabar and ari laya. Zuheb is arguably the finest contemporary performer of this style.

Zuheb is appreciated both in the field of percussion and music throughout the world as an international phenomenon. A classical tabla virtuoso of the highest order, his consistently brilliant and exciting performances have not only established him as a national treasure in his own country but also abroad. His playing is marked by his uncanny intuition and masterful improvisational dexterity. Founded in formidable knowledge and study, he has not let his genius rest there.

Raga and Tala Workshops

Pt Shubhendra Rao, Smt Saskia Rao-de Haas and Sri Zuheb Ahmed Khan will present workshops from 1pm to 6pm, Sunday 4th September in Oxley. Contact Shen on 0415106428 to book.

Interstate Artists



Sri Sayak Bhattacharya - Hindustani vocal

Based in Australia for over 24 years, Sayak was introduced at an early age into Hindustani Classical Music by his mother Smt. Rina Bhattacharya. Over the past decade, Sayak has spent much of his time in India learning in the traditional guru-shishya parampara style from illustrious Gurus Ustad Rashid Khan, of the Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana, and more recently Pandit Vijay Kichlu, one of the old masters of the Agra Gharana.

A budding talent in the world of Hindustani Shastriya Sangeet, Sayak has supported his Gurus at a number of prestigious conferences (including the Dover Lane Music Conference) and has performed in solo recitals in the USA, India (including at Kolkata, Jaipur and Pondicherry) and Australia.



Sri Sridhar Chari - mridhangam

Sridhar Chari has been associated with the Australian music scene for over two decades. He has a rich musical background imbibed through his mother and furthered by many years of musical training when he took up the art of Mridangam playing. Today, he is a leading percussion player for Indian Classical music in Australia and has been performing the Mridangam for the past three decades, winning international acclaim. Rich tonal quality and dynamic improvisation are characteristics of Sridhar's artistry. He attributes his mridangam playing skills to the tutelage and the rich tradition imparted to him by his Gurus, the celebrated mridangam maestro, Dr. Umayalpuram Sivaraman and the artful teacher Kumbakonam Rajappa Iyer.



Sri Kranthi Kiran Mudigonda - violin

Kranthi Kiran Mudigonda had his initial training in music with Sri P.S.S.R Jagannatham and Sri N. C. Ramanujam. He had advanced training under eminent vidwan Sri Dwaram Satyanarayana Rao at Hyderabad. He is currently under advanced tutelage in vocal from Hyderabad Brothers and violin from Parur Sri M A Sundareswaran. He has a vast experience in accompanying local and visiting artistes for various concerts across Australia. Some of the reputed musicians and dancers he has accompanied: The Carnatica Brothers, Sri O S Arun, Dr. S Sundar, Sri Sankaran Namboodri and Padmabhushan Sri C V Chandrasekhar (Bharatanatyam dance exponent), Padmasri Dr Ananda Shankar Jayanth (Bharatanatyam).

Dance Artists



Smt Bindu Rajendren - Mohiniattam

Bindu Rajendren is a dance performer, researcher and educator who first forayed into the spectacular world of dance at the tender age of four. Dance and spiritual connection through Bhava (Sentiment) and Bhakti (Devotion) remains central to all of Bindu's dance practices. Bindu began her training under the expert tutelage of Shri Kalamandalam Mohan in three Indian classical dance styles namely; Bharatanatyam, Mohiniattam and Kuchipudi. However being a Keralite by birth means that she has always held Mohiniattam close to her heart. Bindu's strength is in her abhinaya (art of expression) and her intense story telling abilities. Bindu is also well trained in various Indian folk dance styles such as Rajasthani, Cheraw Dance and Kashmiri dances from Smt. Asha Singh. Bindu is currently pursuing further training in Mohiniattam by internationally renowned Mohiniattam dancer, educator, scholar and researcher Smt Tara Rajkumar OAM (Natya Sudha Dance School, Melbourne).

As a dance researcher Bindu has presented papers at various international academic dance conferences such as at the Dance and the Child International conference in Denmark, World Dance Alliance Conference in New Delhi and the Moving Communities Conference in New Zealand to name a few. She was also a Pecha Kucha presenter at the Taranaki International Arts Festival in New Zealand.

Bindu has over a decade of experience in teaching Indian classical and improvised dances based on Indian classical dance to children, privately and through dance programs offered at schools, art galleries and museums.



Ku. Janani Ganapathi - Bharat Natyam

Since a tender age, Janani has shown immense interest in Indian Fine Arts and her favorite among them has always been Bharatanatyam. She has learnt to dance in different styles: Tanjore, Pandanallur and Vazhuvur respectively, which have helped her to learn the specialities in the particular styles and improve her knowledge and skills in dance. Janani's initial training started at Shree Bharathalaya, Chennai under the guidance of Padmashri Prof. Sudharani Raghupathy. This learning experience boosted her interest to move further in the dance form. Her present Guru is Bharatha Kala Rathna Shri. A. Lakshman, one of the most sought-after Dance Gurus in Chennai, having 'produced' high caliber students.

Janani believes that dance can be a bridge between cultures and communities. Through Bharatanatyam, she aims to spread the message of unity and peace. Not only that but she also believes in performing for events that contribute towards good causes. Moreover, dance is a form of prayer to Janani, which enhances physical, mental and spiritual strength.

It is noteworthy to mention that Janani has also performed Bharatanatyam in the presence of Premier of Queensland Anastasia Palaszczuk and Bollywood actor Abhishek Bachchan and other dignitaries on the occasion of the International Film Festival of Queensland (IIFOQ).

The 2016 Sangeet Premi Rising Star Awards



Ku Oaviya Bavan - Carnatic vocal

Oaviya Bavanendrakumar started learning Carnatic Vocal and Violin under the tutelage of Smt. Manthahini Bogahawatte in 2006 at the age of 7. Since 2009 she has been learning Carnatic Vocal and Violin under the tutelage of Sri B.U. Ganesh Prasad (Chennai, India), taking lessons over Skype regularly, and directly during visits to Chennai in summer holidays. Under her Guru's guidance she has undertaken the Grade 6 Diploma ACMS (London curriculum based Australian examination board) Vocal and Violin Examinations (passed with Distinction) in March

2015, and performed her Carnatic Vocal Arangeetram in January 2016. Since 2013 Oaviya has also taken lessons with a focus on Tamil krithis, under the tutelage of Smt. Karunalatha Vasanthakumar (Brisbane, Aus). In 2014 she undertook intensive direct training under the tutelage of Smt. Bhushany Kalyanaraman. She has also undertaken workshops both (vocal and violin) with various visiting artists to Brisbane, including Sri Suresh Babu, and Sri Vijayaraghavan. In 2014 she was awarded first prize in the 'Vocal' category of the 2015 Brisbane Tamil 4EB Radio competition.



Ku Mathuja Bavan - Carnatic violin

Mathuja Bavanendrakumar began learning violin in 2006 under the tutelage of Smt. Manthahini Bogahawatte (Brisbane, Aus). Since 2009 she has been learning under the tutelage of Sri B.U. Ganesh Prasad (Chennai, India) with lessons taken over Skype regularly, and directly during visits to Chennai in summer holidays. Under her Guru's guidance she has undertaken the Grade 6 ACMS Diploma (London curriculum based Australian examination board) Violin Examinations (passed with Distinction) in March 2015, and performed her Carnatic

Violin Arangeetram in January 2016. She has also undertaken workshops with Sri Vijayaraghavan (Chennai, India) and Sri Suresh Babu (Chennai, India), while they have visited Brisbane for concerts, and have then followed up with workshops while visiting Chennai.

As well as being a talented violinist, Mathuja is also an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer, and won the Sangeet Premi Rising Star Award for South Indian Dance in 2015.



Sri Hariharan Vaheesan - miruthangam

Hariharan Vaheesan has been learning miruthangam under his guru Sri Arthavan Selvanathan since 2007. He progressed through the basic lessons and simple thaalams quite rapidly. Subsequently he has been focusing on more complex rhythmic aspects, such as Korvais, larger Theermanams and Nadais. Additionally he has gained experience accompanying local vocalists and instrumentalists such as veena players in various concerts in Brisbane.

The 2016 Sangeet Premi Rising Star Awards



Ku Ananya Murali - Hindustani vocal

Ananya Muralidharan began her early training in Carnatic music at the age of 5 from Smt. Raji Krishnamoorthy, and Smt. Suma Rudrapatna (2003-2008). Growing up in Adelaide, she was a regular performer at the Shruthi Adelaide (Inc) organisation's community events. She was a School Choir member during 2007-2008 but decided to withdraw from the choir, since it was affecting her Indian diction and style of singing. She commenced Hindustani style singing in 2010, learning locally in Adelaide from Smt Kalindi

Chirmuley. In 2012 she began training from Smt Shucita Rao (Boston) over Skype, and since 2014 has learnt over Skype from Smt. Apoorva Gokhale (Mumbai).



Ku Tina Ravirajah - Bharatanatyam

Vellantina Ravirajah has been learning Bharatanatyam Dance from her guru Smt. Chitra Yogi Srikhanta since the age of five. Over the past 11 years she has had the opportunity to perform at various events and programs. In 2014 at the age of 14, she completed her arangeetram under the guidance of her guru.

In 2014, Tina had the privileged opportunity to travel to India and learn dance items from The Dhananjayans, which were performed at her arangeetram later that year. Upon completing her arangeetram, she wanted to further develop her dancing abilities and started learning dance over Skype with her guru, Smt. Chitra Muralidaran. She was given the opportunity to join her dance show in India later this year.

Vellantina is a high school student eager to use her strong passion and dedication to further develop her dancing career. She is keen to develop new skills to improve her dancing abilities and to progress in the dancing industry to become an established dancer.

Judging Panels:

Carnatic: Smt Usha Chivukula, Smt Susmitha Ravi, Smt Harini Sriram

Hindustani: Sri Joseph Abhay Nand, Sri Yousuf Alikhan, Sri Asad Basit, Sri Shen Flindell

The Sangeet Premi Rising Star Awards were instituted to give an incentive for young students of Indian classical arts to pursue their practice diligently year by year, practise regularly with other musicians, give classical performances at community events, visit India for the purposes of taleem and riaz, and aim to present themselves as artists with attractive photos, biodata and video. In so doing we hope to foster the development of Indian classical music broadly in the community. We look forward to many more talented applicants next year.

Local Accompanists



Sri Joseph Abhay Nand - harmonium

Joseph Abhay Nand is a stalwart participant in the Brisbane Indian classical community. Originally from Fiji, he learnt harmonium from Ustad Mohammed Hussein from Pakistan and Ustad Mehmood Dholpuri from India. He is also accomplished in both tabla and vocal. He learnt tabla from his elder brother Sri Viveka Nand, Ustad Mubarak Khan, Pt Surendra Bhatt and Ustad Hashmat Ali Khan, and learnt vocal from Ustad Ghulam Sadiq Khan.



Sri Murali Ramakrishnan - bansuri

Murali Ramakrishnan is one of the senior Bansuri players in Australia. Murali Ramakrishnan had his training in Hindustani (North Indian classical) music from Pandit Krishnanand of Kirana Gharara. Murali learnt Karnatic (South Indian classical) music under the guidance of Sikkil Sisters Neela and Kunjumani. Murali draws inspiration from both music styles and creates soulful music that touches the heart. Murali has given solo performances at Australia and abroad. He has also accompanied dance performances including Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam and Kathak. Murali teaches music in both Hindustani and Karnatic styles.



Smt Susmitha Ravi - Carnatic vocal

As a Carnatic Vocalist specialising in singing for dance performances, Susmitha has sung for many Bharatanatyam arangetrams. Susmitha had an unique opportunity to sing for an arangetram with Guru Adayar Lakshmanan. Her voice has supported Mohiniyattam performances of renowned dancer Sunanda Nair and Kuchipudi performances of Sonia Nair. Susmitha is one of the rare vocalists who can sing the song and the Jathis for a dance performance. Susmitha teaches Carnatic music and bhajans to children with the intention of creating awareness about this art among the younger generation.



Smt Usha Chivukula - natthuvangam

Usha Chivukula is a passionate promoter of the Indian traditional performing arts, and an experienced performer in dance, drama and music herself. She received training in Carnatic and Hindustani vocal music, and also in the veena, for many years in India, before going on to be selected as an All-India radio artist. More recently Usha has performed classical and popular music concerts across India, Australia and the USA. She has released albums of devotional and light classical ghazal music. Additionally, she is also an exponent of Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi, the traditional dance forms of Southern India, training under the internationally renowned dance guru and musicologist Sri Nataraja Ramakrishna.

Local Accompanists



Sri Shen Flindell - tabla

Shen Flindell started learning tabla in Melbourne from Sri Debapriya Bhattacharya in 1994 and soon went to the holy city of Varanasi in India to study under Pt. Kaviraj Ashutosh ("Ashu Babu") Bhattacharya, a great tabla master of the Benares Gharana. Since his guru-ji passed away in 2004, Shen has received training from a wide range of tabla masters including Pt Govinda Chakraborty, Pt Nayan Ghosh, Pt Suresh Talwalkar, Pt Pooran Maharaj, and Sri Hari Om Hari (in light classical styles). In recent years Shen has taken up pakhawaj as a second instrument, with some guidance from Japanese pakhawaji Sri Tetsuya Kaneko. Shen opened the Ashu Babu Memorial Tabla School in Brisbane in 2006, following his Guru-ji's traditional classical style of teaching. Shen initiated the proposal for Indian music and dance examinations to be recognised for Queensland Certificate of Education which was successful last year. He also supplies and repairs tabla and tabla accessories, trading as Tabla Wala Australia.



Sri Arthavan Selvanathan - mridangam

Arthavan Selvanathan had his initial training in miruthangam under the guidance of Shri Agaramangudi Madhu Kailash in Brisbane and then additional intensive training under Shri Srirangarajapuram Jayaraman and Shri Srirangarajapuram Ganesh in India. He had his Miruthangam Arangetram (stage debut) in 2007. Arthavan has accompanied several carnatic vocal and instrumental musicians in Brisbane and Chennai, including Sikkil Gurucharan (vocal), Maharajapuram Ramachandran (vocal), Yalpanam Karunakaran (vocal), Carnatica brothers (vocal & instrumental) and Amritha Murali (vocal). During the December Music Festival season, he has performed in a number of prestigious Sabhas in Chennai such as the Narada Ghana Sabha, Krishna Ghana Sabha, Bharat Kalachar and The Indian Fine Arts. Arthavan performs at numerous community events around Brisbane, and was the winner of the Sangeet Premi Rising Star Award for miruthangam in 2015.



Sri Sanjeey Sivaananthan - tabla

Sanjeey Sivaananthan began studying tabla in 2007 under Sri Shen Flindell. He attends weekly classes and regular performs at various concerts, e.g. the Annual Ashu Babu Memorial Tabla School Concert and the Woodford Folk Festival. Furthermore, in tandem with weekly classes, Shen organises lessons with other musicians, which enables him to refine the art of accompaniment. Sanjeey performs regularly in community functions e.g. at Sri Selva Vinayagar Hindu temple and other Tamil community functions. Sanjeey was winner of the Sangeet Premi Rising Star Award for tabla in 2015. Since December 2015 Sanjeey has been taking additional training in India and via Skype with Pt Yogesh Samsi of Punjab Gharana.

Organisers



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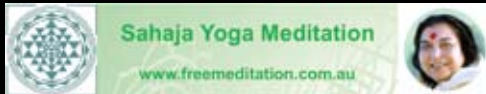
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