

SANGEET MELA 2015

2nd Annual Indian Classical Music & Dance Festival

Saturday 19th September

Queensland Multicultural Centre

Brisbane, Australia



Programme

Afternoon Session: 2pm to 4:30pm

1. SANGEET PREMI RISING STAR AWARD WINNERS:
 - a) BHARAT NATYAM DANCE – Ku Mathuja Bavanendrakumar
 - b) TABLA SOLO – Sri Sanjey Sivaanathan
 - c) VOCAL (Hindustani) – Sri Manbir Singh (Sydney)
 - d) VOCAL (Carnatic) and MRIDANGAM
– Ku Roshini Sriram and Sri Arthavan Selvanathan
2. SITAR – Dr Indranil Chatterjee

~ Interval ~

Sunset Session: 4:50pm to 7pm

1. BHARAT NATYAM DANCE – Ku Janani Ganapathi (Switzerland)
2. TABLA SOLO – Pt Pooran Maharaj (Varanasi)
3. FLUTE (Carnatic) – Sri Sridhar Chari (Melbourne)
4. VOCAL (Hindustani) – Dr Mansey Kinarivala

~ Interval ~

Late Session: 7:45pm to 10:30pm

1. KATHAK DANCE – Dr Helena Joshi with live ensemble
2. VOCAL (Hindustani) – Kumar Gaurav Kohli (Jalandhar)
3. VOCAL (Carnatic) – Smt Manda Sudharani (Vizag)

Please enjoy delicious refreshments in the lobby, supplied by Sitar Restaurant. 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)

The oral tradition of Indian classical music (*guru-shishya parampara*) connects us directly back through the ages to the timeless wisdom of the Vedas, which tell us that music is the most direct path to "God". I really believe that no matter what your religion nor which part of India or the world you come from, Indian classical music is something we can all be really proud of. Whether you're from Punjab, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or one of those like me who just feels an irresistible attraction to Indian culture, we are all brought together in celebration of this wonderful art form. Sangeet Mela is growing in reputation around the country, as evidenced by our Hindustani vocal Rising Star Award winner Manbir Singh who is joining us from Sydney, and quite a few of our audience are coming from interstate to enjoy the festival as well. We are also seeing many other benefits from having initiated this annual event. Last year's Rising Star Award winners have shown increased interest in performing and being involved in classical events, and the standard of entries has risen this year. We have re-established the tradition of presenting Kathak dance with live accompaniment (as opposed to recorded music) and so we're putting out the challenge to dancers in other styles for coming years. Local organisers for great international artists are contacting us to come to Brisbane and be involved in Sangeet Mela. Our local tabla students benefited immensely from lessons with last year's visiting tabla master, Pt Govinda Chakraborty, and this year will be taking a day-long workshop with Pt Pooran Maharaj. Finally, with the addition of Carnatic music and dance this year, we are connecting even more communities through the love of Indian classical culture. Many thanks to our sponsors, artists, volunteers and you the audience for supporting Sangeet Mela in Brisbane.

email: shen@sangeetmela.org



Sangeet Mela Coordinator

Yousuf Alikhan (Sangeet Premi Club)

It is just over a year since the inaugural Sangeet Mela was held in Brisbane. The event had brilliant local, national and international artists who came together to produce some outstanding and memorable performances. We also discovered some exceptional talent through the Rising Star Awards, who will continue to feature on the national and international classical music scene for years to come. Since last year Sangeet Mela has grown by leaps and bounds. This year's programme not only includes distinguished local, national and international artist from the North Indian Classical tradition but also illustrious artists from South Indian Classical tradition of Music and Dance. This year's Rising Star Awards have also grown in stature attracting some bright talent from all over Australia. In addition to promoting, supporting and sponsoring local, national and International practitioners of Indian Music, one of the other aims of Sangeet Premi Club Inc is to promote social cohesion through music and by bringing the two traditions of Indian classical music together, Sangeet Mela 2015 is another step towards achieving that objective. Sangeet Mela 2015 is truly a comprehensive "Indian" classical musical event.

email: sangeetpremiclub@gmail.com

International Artists



Smt. Manda Sudharani - Carnatic vocal

Smt Manda Sudharani is an "A-Top" grade Carnatic Vocalist from Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. A proud disciple of "Vaayuleena Vidya Praveena" & "Sangeetha Kala Sagara" Sri Ivaturi Vijayeswara Rao, who is known for the traditional Gurukula system of teaching. She is the first person to introduce and perform the "Shat kaala Pallavi". She is the first artist to popularize pallavis of all varieties since 1980s and brought gravity to the Concert Format in Andhra. Her "Ragam Thanam Pallavi" are known for both technical excellence & aesthetic appeal.

Smt Manda Sudharani holds a Diploma and Masters in Music from Andhra University. She learnt initially from K Rangacharyulu and Seshumani. However, her performing abilities and musical values have been crystallised by Ivaturi Vijayeswara Rao of Vizianagaram. Manda Sudharani is well-versed in the grammar of Carnatic music and is rooted in classicism. She has popularised the format of 'Pallavi Singing' since early 1980s. She has rendered 'Shat Kaala Pallavi' (Pallavi in 6 speeds). She has also performed concerts with Pallavis having three ragas (Triraga Pallavi) with 2 talas and both talas shown simultaneously with both hands during the concert. Her Swara Kalpana in Vakra Ragas are admirable. She is a regular at the AIR and SPICMACAY.

Many thanks to Tamil Vazhai for arranging the performance by Smt Manda Sudharani and accompanists Sri Sridhar Chari and Sri Kranthi Kiran Mudigonda at Sangeet Mela 2015.



Ku. Janani Ganapathi - Bharat Natyami

Janani Ganapathi, a PhD candidate in Law, is an ardent Bharatanatyam lover hailing from Switzerland. Her initial dance training started at Shree Bharathalaya, Chennai, under the guidance of Padmashri Prof. Sudharani Raghupathy. Her present Guru is Bharata Kala Rathna Shri. A. Lakshman, one of the most sought-after dance Gurus in Chennai, having 'produced' high caliber students.

Janani has been trained in different dance styles: Tanjore, Pandanallur and Vazhuvur respectively. She has performed at several prestigious Sabhas, for Natyanjalis and international festivals in India, Europe and Australia: her recent one being for the Indian International Film Festival of Queensland (IIFFOQ) in the presence of Mr Abhishek Bachchan and QLD Premier Annastascia Palaszczuk.

Janani has often been praised for her clean footwork, elegance and energetic dancing by big names such as Dr. Nalli Kuppuswamy Chetty, Dr. Sirgazhi Siva Chidambaram, Bombay Sisters, etc.

International Artists



Pt. Pooran Maharaj - tabla

Born in 1952 in one of India's most respected and well-known families of great musicians of the Benaras heritage, Pt Pooran Maharaj is the son of late Padma Vibhushan Pt Kishan Maharaj. He took Tabla training from his grandfather, Pt Kanthe Maharaj, the legendary Tabla genius of his time and later, from his father. Receiving well this nearly 400 year old Tabla-heritage, he has performed with great musicians such as Pt Ravi Shankar, Pt Birju Maharaj, Pt Gopi Kishan, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Pt Raajan & Saajan Mishra, Smt Girja Devi, Ustad Nishat Khan, Ustad Ashish Khan, Pt Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Pt Ronu Majumdar, Pt Tarun Bhattacharya, Pt Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, and many others.

He has been appointed by the Government of India to represent, promote and teach Tabla through ICCR, in South American countries, Canada, USA and UK. He teaches his disciples the intricacies of creating complicated Paltaas (variations) and Tihaais (calculated syllables that are played three times in order to finish the rhythmic cycle) spontaneously.

Pt Pooran Maharaj will be giving a tabla masterclass in Oxley on Sunday 20th September. Beginners: 9am-10am, Intermediate 11am-1230pm, Advanced 11am-4pm. Please contact Shen on 0415 106428 for details.



Kumar Gaurav Kohli - Hindustani vocal

Kumar Gaurav Kohli started receiving training at the age of seven from his grandfather Sangeet Acharya Sh. Jagdish Raj Kohli, who belonged to Gwalior Tradition of Khayal Gayaki. In 2002 he followed the suggestion of renowned vocalists Pt Rajan Sajan Mishra to learn from Pt Ganesh Prashad Sharma (disciple of Pt Bhola Nath Bhatt of Allahabad and Ustad Wajid Hussain Khan Saheb of Sahaswan Gharana and Pt Vaman Naraya Thakaar of Gwalior Tradition), a well known guru of classical music. He is a graded (B-High) artist from All India Radio Jalandhar.

His singing style uses melodic ornamentation to enhance the beauty and meaning of raga by means of a systematic elaboration of the raga. His voice ranges from soft and melodious to full throated, from the melodic flow of kan, khatka, murki, gamak, meend, to rapid-fire intricate taans. He represents a generation of bright, new, talented young artists. Specialising in Khayal Gayaki, Kumar Gaurav Kohli is also equally at ease singing devotional Bhajans, Gurmat Sangeet and Tarana. His melodious voice and powerful stage presence thrills audiences in every concert.

Kumar Gaurav Kohli will be performing in several Gurudwaras and Temples while in Brisbane. Please contact Gurbir Singh on 0421 677882 for details.

Interstate Artists



Sri Sridhar Chari - mridangam, flute

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.

In his conquest to gain deeper insights into music, he took up flute playing from Sri R. Thyagarajan, son of the renowned flute maestro, Dr. N. Ramani. This is a passion that has now become his other obsession over the last decade. Over the past few years, Sridhar has presented several flute recitals in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth. He has been featured at the Annual Thyagaraja Utsavam in Melbourne for the past several years.



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).



Sri Maharshi Raval - tabla

Maharshi is a promising tabla player from Benaras Gharana (school) living in Sydney. Maharshi is a student of Late Pt. Nandan Mehta who was a disciple of the legend of Benaras Gharana Late Pt. Shri Kishen Maharaj and has been learning for the last 25 years at Saptak School of Music in Ahmedabad. He has travelled extensively to various parts of the world as an accompanist to Indian Classical Vocalists, Instrumentalists and Kathak Dancers and also won 1st prize for National Youth Festival Tabla Competition in 1994 at Jaipur. He also performed at Saptak Festival's concerts quite often in front of Pt. Kishan Maharaj, Ustad Shahid Parvez, Ustad Zakir Hussain, Pt. Rajan-Sajan Mishra, Late Ustad Allarakha Khan, Pt. Ronu Majumdar etc as the audience.

Local Artists



Dr. Indranil Chatterjee - sitar

Dr. Indranil Chatterjee, a medical practitioner by profession, started learning Indian classical music at a very early age, initially under Pandit Ashit Bannerjee (of Dagar Gharana) and later under Pandit Manilal Nag of Bishnupur Gharana. Dr. Indranil Chatterjee has performed extensively in music festivals in India and abroad. He is a regular performer in Brisbane's classical music circle. Indranil's interest extends to western classical music & jazz, and presently he has been collaborating with jazz musicians in Brisbane. He has performed many fusion music back in Calcutta & recently in Brisbane too. Back in Calcutta, he has also composed music for theatre and has directed music in many Tagore's dance dramas.



Dr. Mansey Kinarivala - vocal

Dr. Mansey Kinarivala started learning classical vocal music at the age of 6, from Shri Krishnakant Parikh, disciple of Shri Pandit Jasraj. She completed her Bachelors in Classical Music (Sangeet Visharad) in 1998, then pursued further vocal classical music training with Surmani, Dr Monika Shah of Kirana Gharana. In 2001 she was the winner of Pandit Omkarnath Thakur Spardha and the following year was honoured by the Indian Ambassador for a musical performance in Romania. She has performed in India, including performances on Aakashvani (radio) and Doordarshan (national TV), as well as internationally. Her musical interests include vocal classical music, bhajans and other devotional songs, Haveli Sangeet, and Sugam Sangeet. Dr Mansey Kinarivala is originally from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, and now resident in Brisbane, Australia, employed as Medical Registrar (Doctor) at Gold Coast Hospital.



Dr. Helena Joshi - Kathak dance

Dr Helena Joshi was a recipient of the inaugural Sangeet Premi Club Rising Star Awards in 2014, and returns to Sangeet Mela 2015 to perform after high audience appraisal. Helena is a solo Kathak artist who has performed Kathak recitals with live musical accompaniment in both India and Australia. Previously a dancer of various Western genres, she developed a deep resonance towards Kathak dance. Helena is blessed to be a disciple of Guru Prerana Deshpande who is an internationally acclaimed leading complete solo Kathak dancer based in Pune, India and carries the artistic lineage of maestro, Guru Dr. Rohini Bhate of Jaipur and Lakhnow Gharanas. She has learnt dance in a *guru-shishya parampara* (master-disciple tradition) and with daily 'riaaz', Kathak soon became her means of artistic expression. Helena believes that Kathak dance is a field that has exquisite depth. It is a form of discipline which has lead her through a journey of self discovery. It brings ecstatic joy and the art form is the ultimate form of prayer. Helena is deeply committed to revive the richness of Kathak and aims to promote the essence of North Indian artistic traditions in Australia.

The 2015 Sangeet Premi Rising Star Awards - Carnatic



Ku Roshini Sriram - Carnatic vocal

Roshini as a child exhibited an ear for music and showed complete understanding and knowledge of shruthi and layam. Roshini learnt her first music lesson from her mother Harini at the age of 4., took her early music training from Smt Vijaya Visvanathan from the age of 6, and moved on to learn full-fledged Carnatic Vocal from Smt Rajyashree Josyer Shrikanth of Saraswathi School of Music in 2005. Roshini has also had music lessons from Sikkil Smt Mythili Chandrasekar, Smt Leelavathi Krishnan and from well established Carnatic vocalist Sri KN Shashikiran during summer holidays in Chennai, India. Roshini is a well known artist in the Brisbane music fraternity having performed for past several years in all community events and won an award for vocalists in Sydney Music Festival. In 2012 Roshini had her "Arangetram" first formal solo vocal performance in Brisbane under the guidance of her Guru Smt Rajyashree Josyer Shrikanth. Since then Roshini has been giving annual concerts in both Brisbane & in Sydney.



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. In Brisbane, Arthavan has performed at Queensland Multicultural Days, two bharathanatyam arangetrams, several Swara Mohini concerts, Brisbane Music Circle concerts and annual programs of local music schools.



Ku Mathuja Bavan - Bharat Natyam

Mathuja began learning Bharathanatyam at the age of five, and has worked hard at perfecting the art form over the past sixteen years. Her Arangetram in 2012 was a memorable event for classical dance lovers in Brisbane, and was carried out under the guidance of Mathuja's Guru, Smt. Manga Surendran, founder of the Eswaralaya Kalaikoodam. While Mathuja was interested in various art forms from a young age, Bharathanatyam certainly occupied a very special place in her heart. She has participated in solo and group performances at several cultural events, fundraisers and religious functions in New Zealand, Townsville, Gold Coast and Brisbane. Mathuja is also brilliant student in her fifth year of university, studying medicine at the University of Queensland.

The 2015 Sangeet Premi Rising Star Awards- Hindustani



Sri Manbir Singh - Hindustani vocal

Manbir was first introduced to Gurmat Sangeet early by his grandfather, Bhai Prem Singh, who enrolled him into the Gandharv Mahavidyalaya where he studied tabla under the oversight of Pt. Madhup Mudgal. After moving to Sydney at a young age, Manbir studied under Giani Gurdev Singh, and learned traditional compositions of Gurmat Sangeet from Bhai Harjit Singh (Delhi). Manbir's more rigorous Classical vocal training began with Ustaad Mazhar and Jawad Ali Khan (grandsons of Ustaad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan) who initiated him as a Ganda Band Shagird of Kasoor Patiala Gharana. He also spent some time learning from Baldev S. Narang, whom he had the privilege of accompanying in All India Radio recordings. Alongside vocals, Manbir studied Dilruba with Bhai Tirlochan Singh Naamdhari and had the privilege of briefly studying the nuances of accompaniment under the Dhrupadi Rabab master, Ustad Gulfam Ahmed Khan. Manbir's training in Shastriya Sangeet has since been and now continues to be under the tutelage of Pt. Shantanu Bhattacharyya (of Kasoor Patiala Gharana). Between completing a double major in Mining and Civil engineering at UNSW, Manbir frequents Kolkata on a yearly basis to study traditional compositions and musical nuances of Indian Raga Music.



Sri Sanjey Sivaananthan - tabla

Sanjey 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. Sanjey performs regularly in community functions e.g. at Sri Selva Vinayagar Hindu temple and other Tamil community functions. He plans to visit India for further study of tabla in 2016.

Judging Panels:

Mridingam, Bharat Natyam dance: Smt Usha Chivukula, Smt Susmitha Ravi, Smt Harini Sriram

Carnatic Vocal: Smt Usha Chivukula, Smt Susmitha Ravi

Hindustani Vocal: Sri Joseph Abhay Nand, Sri Yousuf Alikhan, Sri Shen Flindell

Tabla: Sri Rahim Zullah, Sri Joseph Abhay Nand, Sri Yousuf Alikhan

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 Rahim Zullah - harmonium

Rahim Zullah was born in Suva, Fiji. He comes from a family of music lovers with its roots in Indian classical music and has 5 CDs to his credit – Fiji Ka Safar (A Fijian Journey) Vol. 1 & 2, Tum Ho, Multi Faith Songs, and Music Masala – a spicy blend of Brisbane’s musicians, released and recorded by Radio 4EB. Rahim’s goal is to impart his experience and training to music lovers of all cultural backgrounds, to ensure that the tradition of Indian music remains alive in Australia and to encourage and support such music lovers on the path of the sound of music.



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.



Sri Adarshbir Singh - dilruba

Adarshbir Singh started learning esraj (dilruba) in 2011 from the great esraj player Ustad Sandeep Singh (Punjab). Adarsh has learned vocal from Professor Prem Sagar ji of Benaras Gharana. Adarsh is currently living in Brisbane and doing his Masters of Business from QUT. He had a great interest in learning instrumental music since he was a child. He believes that the purpose of life is to sing.

Local Accompanists



Smt Usha Chivukula - vocal

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.



Sri Gopinath Kathiravelu - mridangam

Gopinath Kathiravelu became involved with Miruthangham at the tender age of six. He began his initial training in miruthangham under the tutelage of Jazhpanam S. Thurairaja. He recently moved to Australia and is continuing his advanced training under the tutelage of Sri Sridhar Chari. He regularly featured in concerts across Jaffna and Colombo during his stay in Sri Lanka. Gopi is a SPEL Environmental Scholarship recipient undertaking his PhD studies in Water Engineering at the University of the Sunshine Coast.



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 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 this year. He also supplies and repairs tabla and tabla accessories, trading as Tabla Wala Australia.

Organisers



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