Report of the Morning Conference 2006

20th December 2006

The morning session started with rendition of songs on Ganesha by Smt. Saraswathi Sankaran and Party.

Sri. T.K. Govinda Rao presented a lec-dem on the compositions of Haridasa supported by Dr. Hemalatha on the violin and Chertalai Sri Ananthakrishnan on the Mridangam. Radha and Namboodiri gave vocal support.

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa, the convenor of the conference introduced Sri. T.K. Govinda Rao and his topic of the day.

The great Krishna Deva Raya pronounced that war and weapon could not save the people. Because of the Muslim invasion, the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagara was lost and this led to the Bhakthi movement and Haridasas came to the forefront in the natural way. A Haridasa is one who thinks, talks and acts with devotion to the Lord.

The 13th and 14th centuries saw the Dasa movement take root. Sri Madhvacharya propagated Dvaitha philosophy and he was instrumental in the Dvaitha philosophy reaching out to the people. Madhwacharya's Sishya was Narahari theertha. His ideas were brought forth in poetic forms. after nearly two centuries, Sri Pada Rayar and his Sishya Vyasarayar established a Haridasa tradition. Their compositions were with simple words that reached everyone. According to Hindu Dharma, to realize 'Mukthi' one needs to follow Karma, Bhakthi and Jnana Margam. They composed songs in the form of Padams, Suladi, Dwipathi, Thripathi, Chaupathi and Ashtapathi. These Sahityas were so beautiful that when one read them one felt like singing them. The Dasas were all adept in both Sanskrit and Vedanta. All their compositions were based on life experiences.

Sri Narahari Theertha had his Mudhra as 'Sri Raghu Kula', Sri Pada Raya as 'Ranga Vittala', Sri Vyasa Raya as 'Sri Krishna', 'Sirikrishna' and 'Krishna', Purandara Dasa as 'Purandara Vittala' and Kanakadasa as 'Nele Adikesava'. There was one Rama Dasar who was a Muslim by birth. In the 18th and 19th centuries there were Vijaya Dasa, Gopala Dasa, his Sishya Jagannatha Dasa etc. There were two women Haridasars also present then.

Sri T.K. Govinda Rao appealed, that one should know the meaning of Sahitya to render it effectively. He also mentioned the need to pronounce its Vallinam and Mellinam according to their appropriateness. He said Gana, Naya and Desiyam are very essential. He sang Hanuma Bheema in Mohana Raga, Roga Harana in

Bhageshree Raga, Hari Chittha Satya in Raga Jhonpuri, tala Beku in Bhairavi Raga, Adago, a Ragamalika, starting with Khamas.

Puranadra Dasa has created a number of songs on Dasavatharam. He was able to bring out the 'Dasavatharas' in one line, in one stanza and in a whole krithi and this reveals his musical abilities. Later he signed off with a Mangalam starting with 'Makutake Mangalam' in Madhyamavathi Raga, which describes Kesadi Pada Varnam of the Lord depicting each Avatara.

Smt. R. Vedavalli offered her expert comments saying Sri Govinda Rao was an authority on Dasa Krithis. Sri T.N. Seshagopalan reiterated that music without Bhakthi is like a flower without fragrance. Yoga, Japam, Sangeetham, etc. , should ultimately culminate in Bhakthi. He wanted the Sampradaya to be kept in its pristine form. He said that initially Namasankeerthana was taken as an Upasana, later became a profession and now it has become a business. He also said that we have lost out on many Dasar Padams and some have changed with the time. He appealed to the institutions like the Music Academy to take up a project in unearthing Dasar Padams that have gone out of vogue.

21st December 2006

Compositions of Dikshita Parampara

Thursday morning saw the Karnaranjani group sing devotional music.

Sri V.V. Srivatsa, convener of the conference, introduced Sangeetha Kalanidhi Smt. R. Vedavalli and the topic of the day. Smt. Vedavalli's lec-dem was based on the Dikshita Parampara, the lineage of Muthuswami Dikshitar. Life history of this illustrious Parampara can be heard from Subbarama Dikshitar's magnum opus, The Sangeetha Sampradaya Pradarshini. Taking up Ramaswami Dikshitar, he has composed Darus, Chauka Varnams, Swarasthana Varnams, Kritis, and Ragamalika with his command of Telugu and Sanskrit and with a sound knowledge of music. Ramaswami Dikshitar's guru was Tanjavur Veerabhadraiyya and learnt Veena from Venkata Vaidhyanatha Dikshitar. Manali Muthukrishna Mudaliar, a patron of arts, made a significant impact on the lives of the entire Dikshitar family. Sriranjani ragam was taken for Chauka varnam and in this unique varnam, second swaram in the charanam was composed by Shyama Shastri, third by Chinnaswami Dikshitar and the fourth by Muthuswami Dikshitar. A swarasthana padam in the raga todi was demonstrated. The genius of Ramaswami Dikshitar is seen where the sahithya is full of swaraksharas. Special mention must be made by the daru, which was demonstrated by Smt. R. Vedavalli. She said it was like Vikatakavi, which reads

the same both ways like a palindrome. The grand raga Hamsadhwani was his creation.

The 3rd son of Ramaswami Dikshitar was Baluswami, a versatile genius, who introduced western violin into the carnatic music system. He could play Veena, Swarabhat, Violin, Sitar, and Mridangam. He was a brilliant composer and a musicologist. Two unique compositions, one a daru in Vasantha and a varnam in Chalanattai, had the swarams in the charanams, with many patterns.

Baluswami Dikshitar composed a brilliant chittaswaram for the kriti Gajavadana in raga todi composed by Kumara Ettendra, which showed the myriad shades of the todi gandhara and Smt. Vedavalli demonstrated this. The 2nd son of Ramaswami Dikshitar, Chinnaswami Dikshitar was a brilliant composer and the first line in his todi composition, Ganalola Karuna was often taken for a pallavi exposition. Smt. Vedavalli demonstrated the song as well the pallavi.

Subbarama Dikshitar, the grandson of Baluswami Dikshitar, at the age of 17, became a vaggeyakara of great merit. He was taught Veena, music, Telugu, and Sanskrit. His beautiful surutti varnam, Parthasarathi, Yadukula Khambodhi kriti, a jatiswara in Yamunakalyani got demonstrated.

Later she dealt with Muthuswami Dikshitar. She dwelled on the kriti "Thyagaraja Mahadhwajaroha" in raga Sri. Ramaswami Dikshitar was instrumental in organizing and deciding the music and dance for the temple, ragas to be played in nagaswaram for particular occasions in the temple. The Sri raga kriti describes vasanthothsava, the famous Thiruvarur Ther, the vahanas, the uthsava murthi etc. Muthuswami Dikshitar made a special mention of the term nagaswaram and not nadaswaram as it is mentioned these days. His mudra was "guruguha"

Smt. Vedavalli's disciples sang some of the Dikshitar's compositions. R. Abhiramasundari, V. Sumithra, and Sumathi Krishnan sang the difficult pieces and brought forth their beauty.

Sri. T.N. Seshagopalan commended Smt. Vedavalli's erudite presentation. He said Vedavalli's lec-dem was like veda pramanam. He said all of them lived in TamilNadu but made compositions in Telugu and Sanskrit. He emphasized that veda adhyayanam helped them to be great vaggeyakaras. Dikshitar's kritis are so rich in raga bhava that they can be taken as the base for raga delineation. Our ragas can be shown by singing a single swara with oscillation. He said the vainikas have an edge over vocalists since the placement of the swaras can be perfectly assessed in Veena and played as well. He mentioned that we have in our midst, many composers and he rightly pointed that compositions that stand the test of time are the true validations of the term vaggeyakkara.

22nd December 2006

Madhuradhwani group rendered kritis on Annamacharya. The rendition was soaked in bhakti rasa.

Sri. V.V. Srivatsa introduced Vidhwan B. Krishnamurthy and the demonstration topic on Maha Vaidhyanatha Sivan. Sri B. Krishnamurthy was accompanied on the violin by Hemamalini and on the Mridangam by Madipakkam Suresh. He was given vocal support by Shoba and Sharada.

In the year 1844, Maha Vaidhyanatha Sivan was born in Vaiyacheri, a town near Tanjore. His father Panchapakesa Iyer had four sons. He was the 3rd son and his brother Ramaswami Sivan and they were very close to each other. Mudikondan Venkatarama Iyer used to say, the music of Maha Vaidhyanatha Sivan and the sahithya of Ramaswami Sivan achieved a perfect blend. The title Maha was given to Sivan by the Kallidaikurichi Pandarasannadhi Subramanya Desikar. Maha Vaidhyanatha Sivan had tristhayi sareeram. He learnt initially from Aanaiyya and came under the tutelage of Manabuchhavadi Venkata Subbaiyer. He was versatile in Telugu, Sanskrit, and Tamil. He was also proficient in Katha Kalakshepam. He travelled widely visiting Madurai, Ramnad, Ettayapuram, Thiruvaduthurai, and Sringeri. His Holiness of Sringeri used to call him often and hear and appreciate his music. He was in the habit of giving a concert on the first day and on the next day he would do Katha Kalakshepam. He has sung in front of the illustrious Subbarama Dikshitar. Maha Vaidhyanatha Sivan has composed 72 Mela Ragamalika. The opening lines were on the Lord of Thiruvaiyyaru Pranatharthihara Swami.

Sri Ramaswami Sivan has composed keerthanas on Periya Puranam and both the brothers sang together. There are many Varnams, kritis, and tillanas to Vaidhyanatha Sivan's credit. He had many sishyas like Umayalpuram Swaminatha Iyer, Palakkad Anantharama Bhagavathar, Ramnad Sri Srinivasa Iyengar, and M.S. Sabesa Iyer to name a few.

Sri B. Krishnamurthy sang the Kambodi piece starting with Pankajakshi. Later he proceeded to sing Mahaganapathi in Hamsadhwani raga. Samvadhi Bhavam was given importance in this kriti. Next he sang Muthukumaraiyyane on Lord Shanmuga in Sankarabharanam. This keerthana is in Tisra Eka taalam in 4 kalais. He mentioned that the word Nesan which was in vogue got changed to Rasa which was not called for. In raga Durbar, Chapu tala, a kriti starting with "Inimelaagilum Undan Karunai" was sung. Natanam Cheyyum Padanar in Kedaragowla consists of madhyama kala sahithya. Every kriti handled by Sivan had a special feature that was mentioned by Sri B. Krishnamoorthy. Next he presented a kriti in Vachaspati in Rupaka tala about the Lord Agastheeswara in Vaiyacheri. He later presented the

Melakarta Ragamalika with the pallavi, Pranatharthihara, and the 2nd and the 10th chakra with shuddha madhyamam and prati madhyamam. The highlight of the programme was a tillana in Simhanandana talam, which consists of 128 aksharams. He explained the Simhanandana taalam as the combination of 6 talas from 108 talas. He explained the intricacies of the tala and the beauty of the sahithya.

Sri T.V. Gopalakrishnan, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri B. Rajam Iyer, and Sangeetha Kalanidhi Vellore Sri. Ramabadran complimented B. Krishnamurthy for his eloquent presentation. Sri T.N. Seshagopalan reminded the gathering about B. Krishnamurthy's guru, Mudikondan Venkatarama Iyer, who was a past master in executing this talam. He said though laya was present in Sukshma form, the talam has to be executed correctly by the performers. He said in olden days mike was not prevalent and Sivan could render in 4-½ kattai and it was a voice that mesmerized everybody. Vaidhyanatha Sivan was a great hero for Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar. T.N. Seshagopalan commended B. Krishnamurthy on his lecture demonstration, with special reference to his demonstration of the Simhanandana tillana.

23rd December 2006

Kanthimathi Santhanam group rendered kritis on Gurusthuthi.

Sri V.V. Srivatsa, convener of the conference, introduced the lec-dem of the day on Sri Swathi Thirunal and the famous violinist Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri T.N. Krishnan to the august gathering.

Swathi Thirunal was born in the year 1813 and he was a later contemporary of the Trinitis. He lived for a meagre 34 years but his contribution to Carnatic music is enormous. He has created Varnams, Kritis, Ragamalika, Khyal, Thumri, and operas like Kuchelopakhyanam and Ajamilopakhyanam, and these works project his mastery over lakshana and lakshaya. All his kritis are totally bhakti oriented and mudhra being Padmanabha, Pankajanabha, and Sarasijanabha. Sri T.N. Krishnan mentioned that one can perform a whole concert with Swathi kritis alone and added that Swathi Thriunal's festivals are conducted all over the world these days. The contribution of Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar, Sri Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, and Musiri Subramania Iyer to Swathi kritis is non-pareil.

Sri T.N. Krishnan with Mannargudi Eashwaran on the Mridangam demonstrated Swathi keerthanas to the delight of the rasikas. He took up the Sankarabharanam, Ata tala varnam and the note-like swarams in the last chittaswaram was demonstrated. He said this varnam was excellent to do sathakam on the violin. Later he played "Mamavasada Janani" in Kanada, Rupaka tala, "Sarasaksha" in Panthuvarali, Adi tala, "Mohanmayee" in Yadhukula Kambodi, Misrachapu. Here

he mentioned that Sri M.D. Ramanathan excelled in Yadhukula Kambodhi kriti rendition. Later he played the padam "Alarsara Paritapam" in Surutti raga, Chapu talam, "Itusagasamulu" in Saindhavi, "Kantanodu" in Neelambari, "Taruneejnan" in Dvijavanthi and ended the demo with "Vishveshwaru" in Sindhubhairavi. Sri M. Chandrasekaran commended Sri T.N. Krishnan's presentation.

Sri T.N. Seshagopalan said Sri Swathi Thirunal was a great vaggeyakara and he had no words to commend his musicianship. Kuchelopakhyanam and Ajamilopakhyanam are in Malayalam script and he wanted these 2 works to be published in Tamil also for the use of the musical community. He mentioned Swathi was a Kavya Chironmani and he dealt with both Siva and Vishnu without "bheda" in his compositions. T.N. Seshagopalan referred to T.N. Krishnan as having 3 "Ts" in his armour, the 3 Ts being timbre, tone, and tune and he excelled in all 3 categories. He said Sri T.N. Krishnan has accompanied great stalwarts like Ariyakkudi, Semmangudi, Alathur, GNB, and Madurai Mani Iyer. He said TNK got the essence of the ragas and exploited it to the fullest and was "Master Krishnan" even then.

24th December 2006

Sunadam Group rendered compositions of Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Iyengar

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa, convenor of the conference introduced Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri B. Rajam Iyer and the topic of the day for the lec-dem. He was given vocal support by Mr. Mani and Mr. Rajaram, accompanied by Mullaivasal Sri Chandramouli on the Violin and Guruvayur Sri Dorai on the Mridangam.

The day's vaggeyakkara was Ramanathapuram (Poochi) Srinivasa Iyengar. Ramanathapuram was a great seat of music. The Maharaja of Ramanathapuram, Sri Bhaskara Sethupathi was a great man of music and he nurtured Music. Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar was born in 1860 in Pappankulam in Ramnad district. When the Maharaja heard him sing while he was very young, he was astonished at Srinivasa Iyengar's musical ability that he took him to his palace. To further his music interest, he put Srinivasa Iyengar under the tutelage of Patnam Subramania Iyer, who was called "Chinna Tyagayya" and Srinivasa Iyengar did gurukula vasam. Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar has composed 54 compositions that are available today. His Mudra was Srinivasa. For his compositions, Srinivasa Iyengar chose ragas handled by Patnam Subramania Iyer. Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar was a "Bhakta Siromani" and each word in his songs emanated from his inbred spirituality. He had an all-round knowledge and he also learnt English.

Rajam Iyer started his demo with a varnam in raga Ananda Bhairavi in Adi talam. He mentioned the salient features of "Gopuccha Yati" in which the sahithya of a composition decreases gradually in a descending order. Later he sang "Chintha Theerchuda" in Sowrasthram composed in the same pattern of "Ninnu Juchi" of Patnam Subramania Iyer. Srinivasa Iyengar's Bilahari kriti "Sri Rama Nannu Brova", Kanda Chapu tala was modelled after "Parithana Michite" of Patnam Subramaniam Iyer. Each of Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar's kritis is a master creation. Rajam Iyer then sang "Sri Raghu Vara" in Huseni. He also sang "Sri Raghukula" in Huseni, Adi tala with Chitta Swaram. This kriti is unparalleled. Devakottai Narayana Iyengar learnt this kriti and included it in his concerts. This piece is great because it is devoid of any allied raga "pidis" like Bhairavi. Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar imaged himself to be the "Nayaki" and Lord Venkatesa as "Nayaka" in this Huseni kriti.

Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar created the kriti "Raghunatha Nannu" in a raga named "Sura Ranjani", his own creation, which reminds the Kadakuthukalam piece of Patnam Subramania Iyer. Rajam Iyer sang "Parthasarathi Ninnu" in Madhyamavathi and later rendered the Khamas raga Javali, "Marulu Konna" He concluded the lec-dem with the Paras raga tillana.

Chengelpet Sri Ranganathan offered his comments on the lec-dem. Sri T.N. Seshagopalan commended Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri B. Rajam Iyer for his scholarly presentation and said he is a Vidwan from whom any ready reference on music can be got. On Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar, T.N. Seshagopalan said that he has created a keertana on Thyagaraja Swami. He said Srinivasa Iyengar got the name "Poochi" because he had a sareeram like a vandu (bee) and gave karvai with clarity. He had a sharp composing brain. The people of Andhra called him "Bujji" which meant "beloved child" and in later years this became 'Poochi' Srinivasa Iyengar composed the kriti "Saraguna Palimpa" to treat a form of Arthritis while he suffered from it himself and he prayed to his Kula Devatha Venkatesa Perumal to cure him. Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar's approach to music was such that he composed kritis like a model composer. The composer had an in-built kalapramana and he composed kritis accordingly, which shows his mastery over music.

25th December 2006

Lec-dem *Papanasam Sivan*

University Music Department rendered compositions of Mysore Vasudevachar.

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa introduced the topic and Sangeetha Kala Acharya Smt. Sulochana Pattabhi Raman presented the lecture on Papanasam Sivan. The composer Papanasam Sivan was an "Era" by himself. In the year 1890, he was

born in Polagam in Tanjore district to Ramamritha Iyer and Yogambal. He was given the name Ramaswamy and was called Ramaiah. When Ramaiah was 8, the family left for Trivandrum since his father passed away. Ramaiah learnt Sanskrit and became a Shastri at 16, and he completed a post graduate course called Upadhyaya successfully. Noorani Mahadeva Bhagavathar, Samba Bhagavathar, Karamanai Neelakantha Bhagavathar, and Koil Ammal helped him learn music. He participated in Neelakantha Sivan's bhajanai from a young age. In 1917, he went on a Padayatra and all his bhakthas called him Papanasam Sivan. He had a sonorous voice and he participated in many festivals. His margazhi month bhajans, in the Mada streets of Chennai were great events then. He was influenced by the music of Konerirajapuram Vaidhyanatha Iyer. He has composed many Thana Varnams, Pada Varnams, Kritis in Tamil and Sanskrit, Tillana, Ragamalika, Chindus like Nondi Chindu etc. He published a Sanskrit Tamil dictionary. Because of the influence of Harikatha, he composed Ramayana in 24 ragas.

Papanasam Sivan has done an opera on Karaikal Ammaiyar. Sri S. Rajam Iyer, Sri S. Balachander and Sethalapathi Sri Balasubramaniam are his famous sishyas. His descendants Neela Ramamurthy, Rukmani Ramani, and Ashok Ramani are nurturing Sivan's compositions even today.

Sangeetha Kala Acharya Smt. Sulochana Pattabhi Raman's students Smt. Prema Rangarajan, Smt. Bhagyalakshmi Suresh, Kumari Revathi and Kumari Ragini Sri sang the compositions. They were accompanied by Smt. Lakshmi Venkataramani on the violin and by Delhi Sri Sairam on the mridangam. Revathi gave a dance demo in the Nattakurinji pada varnam of Sivan. Next was Ka Va Va in Varali. In the first line of this kriti, there is a swarakshara prayogam. Then they moved on to Hamsadhwani in which the vocalists sang Raghu Nayaka of Thyagaraja and later "Karunai Seivai" by Sivan, which had similar Varna mettu. The same exercise was carried out for "Ninnu Nera Namminanu" of Thyagaraja and "Nin Arul Iyambalagumo" of Sivan. Abheri raga kriti "Kanda Vandarul" was sung in which Sivan has used Suddha Daivatam. Athana raga denotes bravery and anger and Sivan has composed "Nee irangayenil pugaledhu", which has swarakshara. The same swarakshara prayogam is used in the Todi kriti "Sadasiva Bhajaname". For his Sanskrit compositions, the vocalists sang "Sri Valli Devasenapathe" in Nathabhairavi. Later they rendered Bhairavi, Kedaragowla, and Sri raga kritis, Navagraha kritis, kritis on Mummoorthies, and on national leaders. A kriti on Gandhi in raga Manirangu was sung.

A revolution in cinema music was brought forth by Sivan. "Maname Kanamum" and "Giridhara Gopala" sung by M. S. Subbalakshmi are some noteworthy songs of Sivan, which have been sung in films. Later, the group sang a tillana in Behag with

Atheetha Eduppu. Surutthi raga mangalam by Sivan was sung at the conclusion of the lecture.

Most of Sivan's kritis bear his signature Rama Dasa. He was conferred Sangeetha Kalanidhi by Music Academy in 1971. Tamil Isai Sangam honoured him with the title Isai Perarignar. He became a fellow of Sangeet Natak Academy. Padma Bhushan was conferred on him. At the age of 73, he passed away.

Sri T.K. Govinda Rao presided over the programme and he commended the presentation.

26th December 2006

Deva Ganavali group sang Vachanas in Kannada language

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa introduced the topic of the day and the presenter Sri V. Subrahmaniam to the gathering.

One of the noteworthy and distinguished composers of the immediate post Trinity period was Neelakantha Sivan. Neelakantha Sivan was born in the year 1839 after his parents prayed to Neelakanthaswami and Anandavalli and they named him Subrahmanya. Even at a young age, Subrahmanya had absorbed the musical, devotional, and spiritual aspects of Tamil literary works such as Thevaram, Thiruvachagam, the Padams of Muthu Thandavar, and the keerthanas of Ramanataka.

Subrahmanya got the name Neelakantha Sivan after his divine vision of Neelakanthaswami. He then composed the Thiruneelakantha dasakam comprising ten stanzas, followed by a dasakam on Uma Devi. Neelakantha Sivan's Mudra was "Neelakantha" Sri V. Subrahmaniam mentioned that Sivan chose Hameerkalyani, an adapted Hindusthani raga for his first musical composition, "Sivanai Ninai Maname"

Sivan's Bhakthi rich literary compositions include Virutthams, Chindu, Kanni, and Pathikam to name a few. Though an ardent Siva Bhakta, he has also composed on other deities such as Lord Padmanabha of Trivandrum, Subrahmania, Devi and Sathyavageeswara and Gomathi Amman of Karamana. Neelakantha Sivan had no Sreesha Eesha Bhedam, which he conveys through his kriti "Sri Kantheswaranai Sri Padmanabhanai", wherein he compares Srikantheswara with Sri Padmanabha.

Some of Neelakantha Sivan's kritis are "Ananda Natamaduvar" in Poorvikalyani, "Darisaname Mukthi Tarum" in Todi, "Adum Chidambareshwarar" in Kedaragowla etc. His compositions on other deities include "Ambike Un Padame" in Dvijavanthi, "Paradevi" in Ananda Bhairavi on the various aspects of Mahalakshmi, "Karunakari" in Bhairavi, etc. Neelakantha Sivan has composed

on deities from Kanyakumari to Trichur and from Thirunelveli to Kalahasthi. His kriti "Sambho Mahadeva" in Bhowli, on Kalahasteeshwara, has been immortalized by Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi. Sri V. Subrahmaniam's students performed "Sambho Mahadeva" in Rupaka Tala and "Ananda Natamaduvar" in Rupaka tala.

V. Subrahmaniam mentioned that Sivan has created an exceptional Ragamalika piece in the following ragas with their names figuring in the respective parts: Nattai, Varali, Sri, Bhairavi, Kalyani, Arabhi, Saindhavi, Todi, Parasu, Mohanam, Saveri, Khamas, Sankarabharanam, Suratthi, Dhanyasi, Athana, and Madhyamavathi. Later V. Subrahmaniam's students performed "Sivanandam Brahmanandam", in Reetigowla raga, Adi tala, a kriti in which Neelakantha Sivan explains the nature of real bliss. Neelakantha Sivan chose commonly handled ragas excepting Dvijavanthi, Naganandini, and Mangalakaisiki, which may be counted as rare.

V. Subrahmaniam said that Neelakantha Sivan was a "mumukshu" – a person desiring Moksha or Salvation. Sivan was deeply rooted in Advaitic philosophy. He could predict his end. In the year 1900 on a Monday, a Pradosham day he uttered the word Mahadeva thrice and shed his mortal coils. Papanasam Sivan was Neelakantha Sivan's foremost disciple.

It is believed that Sivan composed a thousand songs but what are available are only about a hundred. Prof. R. Srinivasan, Principal of the Maharaja's College of Science and Smt. M.A. Saradambal, great grand-daughter of Neelakantha Sivan took efforts to publish his works. Sri V. Subrahmaniam said that the Music Academy could undertake to publish his kritis.

Sivan's compositions could be compared to Saint Thyagaraja's compositions such as the Gowla Pancharatna Dudukukala where he had chided and warned the musician from falling in wrong ways. As a memorial to Neelakantha Sivan, the Neelakantha Sivan Sangeetha Sabha in Karamana, Trivandrum was inaugurated in 1975 by Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer.

At the end of the demonstration, Sri V. Subrahmaniam's students Bhavana Vishwanathan and Saraswathy Ramachandran sang the kriti "Yendraikku Siva Krupai" in Mukhari raga, Chapu tala and the concluding piece "Navasiddhi Petralum" in Kharaharapriya, Chapu tala was sung by Sri V. Subrahmaniam and Bhavana Vishwanathan. They were accompanied by Sikkil Sri Bhaskaran on the violin and by Mannarkovil J. Balaji on the Mridangam.

Sri B.M. Sundaram offered his comments. Sri T.N. Seshagopalan said that from time to time, for Sangeetham and Bhakthi, persons of great eminence are born. During the period of Neelakantha Sivan Vallalaar was also present. He endorsed the view that there was no Bheda of Sreesa and Eesa for Neelakantha Sivan. The

month of Margazhi is special for both Siva and Vishnu. A hybrid language of Tamil and Malayalam is found in his Krithis. For Sangeetham to flourish, humility is the most important component. Neelakantha Sivan has composed Dhasavataram in five gowlais. He requested to unearth the other Krithis from Trivandrum, which the Music Academy could publish for the benefit of music lovers.

27th December 2006

Lec-dem *Madurai Sri T.N. Seshagopalan*

The devotional music was rendered by Thirupugazh Anbargal.

Sri V.V. Srivatsa introduced the topic of the day and the Conference President Madurai Sri T.N. Seshagopalan.

The Karnaranjani raga, which is handled by and large in the present day concert platform, is one of the creations of Dr. Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar. The credit goes to Sri Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan for popularizing it after he started singing that raga as a prelude to the kriti "Vanchatonu" with a chittaswaram composed by him.

Madurai Sri T. N. Seshagopalan's topic was Harikeshanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar as a vaggeyakara. He commenced the lec-dem saying Muthiah Bhagavatar was a 'Mahan' and trying to talk about his creation is like taking the sea water and trying to put it in a container. Muthiah Bhagavatar was in the period of 1877 – 1945. His grandfather was Muthu Subbaier, a Sanskrit scholar and an authority on Veda who did pravachanam on Ramayanam and his father was Lingam Iyer. Muthiah Bhagavatar had a questioning mind that every aspect of music got questioned by him. Patnam Subramania Iyer was his hero. In those days in Tanjore, Harikatha art was fostered. Lakshmana Suri, father of Justice T.L. Venkatarama Iyer was his maternal uncle and he had to his credit the title of Maha Mahopadyaya and he gave material for Harikatha to Harikeshanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar. Muthiah Bhagavatar initially made simple krithis for his Harikatha. He was famous for his 'Thanam' singing. He introduced musical compositions like Kavadi Chindu, Nondi Chindu, Themmangu in his Harikatha and took ample material from Tamil literature. He was noted for his punning on words. The 'note' that was sung and made very famous by late Madurai Mani Iyer was composed by Muthiah Bhagavatar. He interacted with Abraham Pandithar who was a musicologist of repute and he composed kritis in the line of Thyagaraja, Dikshitar and Shyama Sastri. The first keerthana sung by Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan was in Huseni Raga, "Theliyakane". He took up the musical forms of Muthiah Bhagavatar for enunciation. The krithi, "Amba Vani", started with panchamam. Tradition in innovation and innovation in tradition is found in kritis of Muthiah Bhagavatar. A

krithi in Kadanakudukalam starting with "Giripriyam Gangadharam" was taken up. He has done a chittaswaram and has given a different startup for this kriti starting in the Thara Shadjam. He literally foresaw the way the chittaswaram will shape up in the next forty years. The chittaswarams did not follow the pattern found in those days and thus he became a 'Deergadarshi' He then sang "Kripanidhe Kripajaladhe" in Hamsanadham with the Arohana and Avarahona running as Sa re ma pa ni sa, Sa ni da ni pa ma ri sa (a janya of Neethimathi). He made known this kind of a sampradaya in those days.

Talking about the rhetorical beauties, he composed many varnams with Swaraksharams shining like jewels. He had used Vaadhi Samvaadhi and Gopuchha Yati prayogas. He later took up an Ata Tala varnam in Mohanam. "Mana Mohana" was composed for the occasion of the Arangetram of Ramanathapuram Sri C.S. Sankarasivam, the foremost disciple of Harikeshanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar and Guru of Madurai Sri T.N. Seshagopalan. This kriti was in praise of H.H. Muthuramalinga Sethupathy.

Muthiah Bhagavatar was a pioneer for many types of compositions and many types of technical virtuosities. Muthiah Bhagavatar's Daru varnam, "Maathe" in Khamas was taken up next. It is a model composition. The muttai swarams after the anupallavi has swarams, solkattu and sahityam. The fourth chittaswaram of the Daru varnam in the raga Khamas shines with Swaraksharams and rhetorical beauties such as Ni Maha Mata, Ni Sama Nigamasani, ManidaGanidariGadarini, Nidamaga. The very same phenomenon is seen in the third chittaswaram of the Ata Tala varnam in Mohanam reading as "Dada Sagasa Dada, Padagada, Saga, garida, Parida, Dapadaparigari. Madurai Sri T.N. Seshagopalan observed the appropriateness of the Daru varnam in the raga khamas (Khamasu khamasu), which has the effect of Vikatakavithvam. Muthiah Bhagavatar later moved to Mysore where he was looked after very well by the Maharaja. The Maharaja himself was a vidwan and thus Muthiah Bhagavatar's craft of composing came to light. Madurai T. N. Seshagopalan sang a kriti, "Manamu Kavalanu Talli", in raga Sahana. A chittaswaram was rendered for this piece. This piece indicates a personal instance in his life. While he sang initially in front of the Maharaja, he became a victim of the weather and the concert was not his best. He became very upset and sang this kriti in front of Devi Chamundeshwari. The Maharaja happened to hear him sing in front of the Devi and immediately made him the Asthana Vidwan. This krithi starts in 'ma' and he introduced a new placement for ma for the commencement of the kriti and this has been an entirely new approach for Sahana raga. A good collection of new compositions was composed after he became the Asthana Vidwan of Mysore.

Muthiah Bhagavatar's imagination was very great. He had mastered the old order so well that he composed new compositions with great ease. Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan's guru wanted him to do chittaswaram specially for the kritis in the ragas created by Muthiah Bhagavatar and Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan has happily complied to his guru's wishes.

Later different musical ways of rendering was taken up. He had a flair for composing krithis in Thisra Nadai. He has composed kriti in what is known as "Gaja Gati". A kriti "Gam Ganapathe Namo Nama", which is in Tisra Nadai was sung. Muthiah Bhagavatar collected Swati Tirunal's kritis from many households in Trivandrum. Nearly 400 songs were obtained by his efforts. He lost his daughter and was in deep sorrow and moved to Kasi. He happened to hear 'Sohini' at Kasi, which reminded him of Hamsanandi of our Carnatic system. Sri Madurai T.N. Seshagoplan sang the kriti "Neethu Mahima Pokata Na Tharama" in Hamsanandi, which starts from the Nishadam. The "Ganakramam", the unwritten law was taken into account, that is, starting from Thara shadjamam that was in use then. This pattern is adopted in Sivan's "Srinivasa Thiruvengada" and "Pahi Jagatjanani" of Swati Thriunal in Hamsanandi.

Karnaranjani, Pasupathipriya, and Vijayasaraswathi raga kritis were sung with chittaswarams. Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan observed the raga created by Muthiah Bhagavathar as Budha Manohari. This raga has been the result of the Gruhabeda, taking the Madhyamam Moorchanai of Kuntalavarali. He sang "Igane Tala" in Guha Ranjani raga. The Kapi raga kriti "Raga Brahmamaanar" was sung by Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan. This kriti was composed when Madurai T. N. Seshagopalan did a Harikatha on the life of Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar as Gayakamani Charithram in which he had included all the ragas popularized and created by Muthiah Bhagavathar.

Later he described raga Niroshta. "Oshtai" means joining of the lips. In raga Niroshta one should eschew the notes ma and pa and thus the lips do not join. The important feature being even in the sahithyam the lips do not join. He demonstrated this song "Rajaraja Aradhithe, Nadhanithe Sharade" A tillana in Niroshta composed by Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan with the ankitha "Harikesa Dasa" was sung. The tillana got started in the higher octave, swaras, solkattu, and sahithyam adhered to the raga Niroshta and it was a phenomenon.

Muthiah Bhagavathar composed a 'temmangu' in Yadukula Kambodi. The kriti "Shantamaga Katchi Tandidum" in Yadhukula Kambodhi is on Lord Narasimha and this kriti followed the spoken Tamil language of Thirunelveli. He said from Harikatha tradition ragas like Jonpuri, Sindhu Bhairavi, and Kapi got popularized.

He rounded off the lec-dem with "Maamoor Valamperuga Vanda Kali" in Sindhu Bhairavi. Muthiah Bhagavathar explored all the possibilities of the ragas, which were handled by the Trinity and gave a new dimension with a fresh approach. He popularized many ragas and created many new ragas, and they are a happy addition to the realm of Carnatic music. This feature was one of the greatest contributions of Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar to the world of Carnatic music. His signature was Harikesa.

28th December 2006

Lec dem *Dr. S.A.K. Durga*

Sri C.V. Bhavani Shankaran and party rendered Tiruppugazh hymns.

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa introduced the topic of the day. Dr. S.A.K. Durga presented the lecture on the compositions of Kshetragna.

Kshetragna was an illustrious vaggeyakkara. He lived in the 17th century. He hailed from Muvvapuri that is in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. His name was Varadayya. His mudra was Muvvagopala, which appeared in any section of the padam. His padams have rich musical content besides their lyrical beauty with madura bhakthi. This madura bhakthi is based on the ultimate oneness of man with God, the total surrender to God.

The late Subbarama Dikshitar in Sangeetha Sampradaya Pradarshini refers to Kshetragna's life. Kshetragna was a pre-Trinity vaggeyakkara. His padams are full of raga and rasa bhava. The padams are exquisite pieces that were born out of the creative imagination of the sahithya and sangeetha suitable for dance and music. They are found in Nayaka/Nayaki bhava. One finds melodic progressions of the raga. They have subtle gamakas and inflexions. They also have slow tempo gamakas. Modulation of voice, continuity of the voice, and breath control are necessary features to sing the long melodic phrases.

"Payyada" in Nadanamakriya in tisra triputa was sung by Dr. Durga for demonstration. This padam is in Vilamba kaalam. The melodic progression comes in parts and the grief is expressed in the last line.

The forerunner of padams are Nammalwar's lyrics of the 7th century. Later came Jayadeva's Ashtapathi. The padams have Sambhoga and Vipralamba sringaras expressed. He has composed padams in Kambhoji, Mukhari, Kalyani, Saveri, Todi, Bhairavi, Begada, Huseni, Punnagavarali etc. There are different kinds of pathos in padams. Veena Dhanammal and padams were inseparable. The value of abstract music is found in Veena Dhanammal's music. Dhanammal's

family was a repository of padams. "Rama rama Prana Sakhi" in Bhairavi was popularized by Brinda amma. The tape of this was played. Then "Kuvalayakshiro" in Gowlipanthu sung by Muktha was played on the tape. Dr. Durga also sang this piece. Dr. Durga said the padams are treasures and the varna mettus have not changed. She requested all big vidhwans to sing and youngsters to learn these padams to keep the sampradaya alive.

Dr. B.M. Sundaram, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Smt. R. Vedavalli, and Ravikiran offered their felicitations for the presentation.

Madurai Sri T. N. Seshagopalan in his observation said the Jeevathma (Nayaki) longing for the Paramathma (Nayaka) was expressed through padams. The Namasankeerthanam tradition has contributed extensively to Carnatic music. He mentioned our Carnatic system can give the voice the training it needs to suit any form of music. He ended up saying Pallavi singing is suited for men while padam singing is best suited for women.

29th December 2006

Lec - Dem ***on Annamacharya by Sangitha Kalanidhi M. Chandrasekharan***

Subhasruthi Group rendered Tirumangai Azhwar Pasurams.

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa introduced the speaker Sangitha Kalanidhi Sri M. Chandrasekharan and the subject of the day.

Sri Annamacharya's krithi 'Sriman Narayana' in Bowli ragam was taken as the first piece for demonstration. Sangitha Kalanidhi Sri M. Chandrasekharan said there is no Anupallavi for this krithi and there is only charanam. Later he sang Sri Ranjani Raga Krithi, Vedakina Giriye. In the Pallavi it is said that Veda is the essence of everything. Annamacharya says Hari is the greatest Lord and Dhyanam is the best mode of worship and Venkateshwara is the Moola Mantra for everything.

The krithi in Sankarabharanam, which was tuned by Sangitha Kalanidhi Sri Nedanuri Krishnamurthy was mentioned. He moved on to a Shubha Pantuvarali krithi, in Adi Tala. Annamayya sang only on the Lord and not on any human being. The Sudhha Dhanyasi kirthi, Bhaavamulona, was rendered next. The next krithi was tuned by the Late Kadayanallur Venkataraman which starts as Bhavayami Gopala. He ended the demonstration with the Navaroj krithi Ksheeraabdhi. In this krithi the Lord is worshipped with camphor. Sri Chandrasekharan was accompanied on the violin by Smt. Bharathi and on the Mridangam by Thirugokkarnam Krishnamurthy.

Sangitha Kalanidhi Sri T.K. Govinda Rao, Smt Suguna Purushottaman and Sri S.R. Janakiraman offered their comments. Madurai Sri T.N. Seshagopalan praised Sri M. Chandrasekharan for virtually transporting everyone to have the Lord's Dharshan at Tirupati. He said the great Nammalvar and Annamayya had the same birth star, Vaishaki Vishakam indicating their oneness in Vaishnava Bhakthi. He said that Annamayya and Bhadrachala Ramadasar both suffered in the prison but their outpourings were totally Bhakthi oriented.

Annamayya's krithis are divided as Adhyaathmika and Sringara rasa krithis. He has sung about the festivals of Tirupati in his compositions. He mentioned that in Harinama Sankeerthanam, the focal point was Lord Vishnu. Vaggeyakaras varnamettus are great sources for music and he wanted Sangeetham and Sampradayam not to be tampered with.

30th December 2006

Lec-dem – P.S. Narayanaswami

Abhirami Sathsangam rendered compositions on Vishnu.

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa introduced the topic of the day and Sangitha Kala Acharya Sri P.S. Narayanaswami gave the presentation on the rare kritis of Thyagaraja. Sri P.S. Narayanaswami's lady students gave a sumptuous fare of rare kritis such as "Raghunandana" in raga "Suddha Desi", a Natabhairavi janya, the Aarohana being Sa Ri Ga Ri Ma Pa Da Ni Sa and Sampoorna Avarohana. Later they rendered "Maati Maatiki" in Mohanam, and "Etladorikitivo" in Vasantha. A kriti in Devagandhari, Evarimanaku, Adi tala that features in Nowka Charitram was taken up. Sri P.S. Narayanaswami said he learnt rare kritis from Maruthuvakudi Rajagopala Iyer, Sangitha Kalanidhi T.M. Thyagarajan, A. Sundaresan, Suguna Purushothaman, Chinglepet Ranganathan, and Sangitha Kalanidhi Mani Krishnaswamy. He thanked Sangitha Kala Acharya Sri S.R. Janakiraman for giving him valuable information.

Later his men sishyas rendered kritis "Nijamuka Nee" in Sahana, "Palamu Kulamu" in Saveri, Adi tala tisra nadai, "Vatsunu Hari" in Kalyani, Adi tala, "Neeku danaku" in Begada, Misra Chapu, and "Charanu Charanu" in Madhyamavathi. Sri P. S. Narayanaswami's students were accompanied on the violin by Amritha Murali and on the Mridangam by K. Sankaranarayanan.

Sangitha Kala Acharya Sri S.R. Janakiraman and Sangitha Kala Acharya Chinglepet Sri Ranganathan felicitated Sri P.S. Narayanaswami.

Madurai Sri T.N. Seshagopalan complimented Sri P.S. Narayanaswami for his Acharya status, since he was imparting music to many students. Thyagaraja

kritis were a great source of inspiration for later composers like Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Iyengar, Patnam Subramania Iyer, and Papanasam Sivan to name a few. He said Thyagaraja was a Sadguru and all his kritis were about Lord Rama and his total Saranagati is seen in his kritis.

31st December 2006

Music Academy Conference

Devotional songs were rendered by Rajarajeshwari Mandali.

Dr. V.V. Srivatsa introduced the speaker and the topic of the day.

On the last day of the music conference of the year at the Music Academy, Veena Vidushi Smt. Vidya Shankar presented the Vaggeyakkara Vaibhavam of Shyama Shastri, Subbaraya Shastri, and Annaswami Shastri. They are father, son, and grandson respectively.

All the three of them were Kamakshi bhakthas and they were compositions were all on Kamakshi.

Annaswami Shastri has composed varnams also in addition to keerthanas in contrast to his forefathers. Smt. Vidya Shankar demonstrated a varnam of the composer in Thodi raga, Adi tala commencing with the sahithya 'Karunakatakshi Nannu Kavave Kanchi Kamakshi', indicating that his varnams are also on Kamakshi.

His compositions are all in easy Sanskrit and short ones. Whereas, Shyama Shastri's kritis had minimum or no sangathi patterns. Those of Subbaraya Shastri and Annaswami Shastri were adorned with sangathis. The pallavi of Annaswami Shastri's kritis were straightforward statements. And only latter part of the pallavi had sangathis. The kritis were full of bhakthi, raga bhavam, and well bound in tala. Deep emotions are expressed very well in Sanskrit by Annaswami Shastri as easily as in Telugu or Tamil.

Students of music can easily understand the raga lakshanams from compositions of great vaggeyakkaras and Annaswami Shastri's are no different. In his Saranga piece, the sanchara in tara sthayi has been limited by only touching the gandhara and not beyond, clearly indicating that in this raga sanchara in the tara sthayi is not advisable. In his Bhairavi kriti he has started the pallavi with the swara structure Sa Ga Ri Ga Ma, true to the raga lakshana. The use of chatursruthi daivatham is also minimal. This was demonstrated. In the Asaveri piece, the sancharas of the raga are well revealed. Annaswami's kritis 'Moharagni Maampahi' in Bilahari and 'Parama Paavani Mamava' in Atana were sung by Smt. Sugandha Kalamegham to the accompaniment of Veena by Smt. Vidya Shankar.

Subbaraya Shastri had the benefit of absorbing his guru and father, Shyama Shastri's style and thinking to a great extent. That he was an image of his father is clearly reflected in his compositions. He had imbibed Thyagaraja's sangathis set up from his interactions with the disciples of the Saint. Even though much junior to Muthuswami Dikshitar, Subbaraya Shastri had the opportunity to associate with him and thereby absorb his madhyama kala sahithya patterns.

Shyama Shastri was the one who gave a high status to Swarajathis through his monumental pieces in Bhairavi, Thodi, and Yadukula Kambhoji. Following this set up, Subbaraya Shastri has composed Swara sahithya for his kritis as though these are miniature Swarajathis. As examples, Smt. Vidya Shankar demonstrated the kritis 'Shankari Neeve', Begada, 'Janani Ninnuvina', Reetigowla, 'Ninnuvina Gati', Kalyani, and 'Yema Ninne', Mukhari.

Even though Subbaraya Shastri closely followed Shyama Shastri in composing, it was not imitative. Shyama Shastri's signature or Mudra was 'Shyama Krishna' and Subbaraya Shastri's, 'Kumara' Annaswami Shastri did not have any Mudra for his compositions. The compositions of all the three are for the humanity as a whole and far from selfish aims. With Shyama Shastri's kriti, a mangalam, which revealed the thinking 'Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu', Smt. Vidya Shankar concluded the presentation. She was assisted by Sri. Ram Nayak on the Veena and Smt. Sugandha Kalamegham, Vocal.

The presentation was commended by Sri. T.N. Krishnan, Sri. T.V. Gopalakrishnan, Smt. Vedavalli, Smt. Kalpagam Swaminathan, Vellore Sri. Ramabhadran, Sri. M.S. Gopalakrishnan, and Sri T.K. Govinda Rao.