

Taking music to school children

Music Forum, in association with The Music Academy, organised a mega workshop titled ‘Yuva Rasika’, for school students, at The Music Academy, Madras, on 31 August 2019. Now an annual feature, Yuva Rasika has become a sought after event for school students. Twenty schools from across the city, and as far as from Vellore and Sholingur, participated.

The event was inaugurated by actor and playwright Y.Gee. Mahendra in the presence of N. Murali, President, The Music Academy and Dr. S. Sunder, Convenor, Music Forum, Chennai Chapter. A moment of silence was observed as a mark of respect to Mrs. Y.G. Parthasarathy, Founder and Dean, Padma Seshadri Group of Schools, who passed away recently. Students of Rukmini Devi Natyakshetra rendered the invocation song and Sunder welcomed the gathering.



Invocation by the children

He thanked the Music Academy for joining hands with Music Forum for the cause of building rasikas for the future, through the project called ‘Yuva Rasika’. N. Murali expressed satisfaction in collaborating for an event of this nature and said he was happy to see the vibrant children attending a music workshop. Y.Gee. Mahendra congratulated the efforts of Music Forum and the Music Academy in taking music to school

children and enthused the children to make good use of this opportunity.

Dr. Sunder led the first session on “enjoyable moments in

a concert”. He had a full-bench concert team, accompanied by B. Ananthakrishnan (violin), Mannarkoil Balaji (mridangam), Nerkunam S. Shankar (khanjira), Sai Subramaniam (morsing) and Sunder’s disciples, J.B. Sruthi Sagar (flute) and J.B. Keerthana (vocal support). Dr. Sunder gave a glimpse of a varnam in four speeds followed by a breezy *Sobhillu saptaswara* (Jaganmohini) with its grand chittaswaram which brought in huge rounds of applause. A novel feature was the presentation of a pallavi using the names of the artists on stage. The musicians presented it with a few rounds of niraval and swarams, followed by a short tani avartanam by the ensemble which was also thoroughly enjoyed by the students.

The second session was presented by voice specialist, Ananth Vaidyanathan. He brought to the fore the importance of understanding the strengths in every voice and how to use them effectively. He demonstrated a few techniques by singing in different octaves and genres and also involved the students in a practical demonstration.

The third session was presented by iconic dancer-scholar Padma

(L to R): Mannarkoil Balaji, Nerkunam Shankar, J.B. Keerthana, S. Sunder, Sruthi Sagar, Sai Subramaniam and Ananthakrishnan



(L to R): Padma Subrahmanyam, Gayathri Kannan and Mahathi Kannan

Ananth Vaidyanathan



Subrahmanyam on “appreciating heritage values in Indian classical dance forms”. She beautifully elucidated the basic movements in dance and made the session interactive and interesting by way of requesting the children to clap along with her in different rhythms. The students perfectly followed her and the result—the hall reverberated with *tei tei dhi ti tei!* Gayathri Kannan’s vocal support and Mahathi Kannan’s dance added grace to Padma’s presentation.

Music Forum recognised all the music teachers who had put in monumental effort in mobilising the students, by way of presenting them with a medal and the title “Supporter of Yuva Rasika”. The Yuva Rasika awards to the top three schools, who sent the maximum number of students, were bagged by Velammal Group of Schools, P.S. Senior Secondary School and Vidya Peetam School, Sholingur. K.N. Ramaswamy, Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai, presided



A section of students

over the valedictory function and gave away the awards. Shwetha Harshavardhana was the master of ceremonies for the entire event. The curtains came down with the National Anthem led by the teachers.

Every student who participated not only carried home sweet memories but also took home a copy of *Sruti* magazine and Cavinkare’s refreshing ‘Maa’ drink!

SAMUDRI

