

## **Carnatic Music- Nobility in Giving**

By Smitha K. Prasad

Dear readers, in this week's column we look at Carnatic music and its role in philanthropic causes. Classical music, Carnatic music included, generally has a smaller audience base than other popular forms of music, which commonly translates into lower revenue stream cycles. Fortunately, this has never hampered Carnatic musicians from supporting and donating to philanthropic causes.

Readers may remember reading about the doyen of Carnatic music- Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi (1916-2004) in previous columns. A prolific performer, M.S. performed concerts at a number of prestigious venues including the Madras Music Academy. She was a trailblazer for women since performance at concerts during her times was, for the most part, reserved for male vocalists. M.S. was awarded a number of titles including the prestigious *Sangitha Kalanidhi* award in 1968. She was bestowed with enormous prize money with these awards, most of which she donated to charity. M.S. also raised enormous amount of money for charitable organizations through concert performances. She donated the proceeds of all her concerts into various charitable endowments over her lifetime- a life-long commitment to philanthropy.

Another organization "The Samudhaaya Foundation" was founded in 1999 and has the renowned Carnatic singer Smt. Sudha Raghunathan as the managing trustee. The foundation supports various initiatives and Smt. Sudha herself has performed many benefit concerts to raise money and awareness for multiple causes. Smt. Sudha Raghunathan, the *Sangitha Kalanidhi* awardee for 2013, is the fourth generation of musicians from the GNB school to receive the prestigious award.

Of late, many musicians routinely participate in the "Joy of Giving Week", an annual festival of philanthropy, where they raise funds and create awareness about noble causes by either performing or being a part of organizations that support noble causes. In the RTP area, the NCYCAC (North Carolina Youth Classical Arts for Charity) organizes a fund-raising event every year by holding youth Carnatic concerts, and then donates the proceeds to a cause.

Till we meet next time, I would encourage all readers, to attend Carnatic music concerts- especially when the musicians perform for philanthropic causes.

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