

HAMSADHWANI - 2005 - 06 - FESTIVAL - Review Report

We offer our profuse thanks to you for your gracious and munificent support for our 16th. Annual Music and 11th NRI Festival that enabled us to offer a marathon 110 – day non-stop series of 150 concerts from December 10, 2005 to April 15, 2006.

HAMSADHWANI is widely known as a cultural organization of standing. You will be happy to be informed of the highlights of the festival to assure that your sponsorship and your continued support is justified.

1. We came into being 16 years ago, on August 18, 1990, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer inaugurating it and D.K. Pattamal lighting the traditional lamp. Our first concert was by Mandolin maestro U. Srinivas.
2. During his visit to us 9 years ago, Mr. Venkataraman, former President of India, remarked during his speech that HAMSADHWANI is no longer a “child prodigy” but a mature organization. He was astonished by our rapid growth.
3. Our concerts are held in an excellent open-air environment in the Youth Hostel lawns, Adyar. To protect ourselves against rain, we put up an imposing roof at a heavy cost for the festival period December – April.
4. We are all members of a family – the HAMSADHWANI family. Our family has grown like a banyan tree. Perhaps we should take recourse to some “Birth Control !”. The attendance in our concerts is much higher than in other sabhas, in terms of quality as well, most heartening to us.. We had a record addition in our new members this year.
5. In our budget, performing artistes get top priority. Our working expenses are negligible – the least among sabhas and cultural organizations.
6. Our music school is expanding year by year, with experts in our faculty imparting thorough training to our students.
7. Apart from concerts, we arrange discussions and seminars including debates on the Union Budget.
8. HAMSADHWANI is the only organization that has an exclusive series for NRI’s living abroad. During the X-mas season, strong cultural ties bind NRI’s with India through this effort of ours. It is not just music only. HAMSADHWANI has decided to start a wing called “International Chapter” and a website is being created – www.hamsadhwani.org.in
9. As music is Veda, although a very few have knowledge of Hindustani Music in this part of the country, we hold regular concerts from North Indian artistes. And these are heavy on our budget though.
10. HAMSADHWANI has never forgotten that it is a part of society and its obligations to society. We have a long list here. We are quick to help fellow citizens when calamity hits them. To name a few, funds were quickly collected for relief during earthquakes in Maharashtra and Gujarat and natural calamities like Tsunami and aid to Kargil war victims.

11. We offer Rs. 10,000/- as cash award to old but renowned gurus. Thanjavur Sankara Iyer, kallidaikuruchi Mahadeva Bhagavathar, K.R. Kedaranathan, Bhajan exponent Ramamurthy Rao and Kuzhikarai Viswalingam are the recipients so far.

Festival Highlights

- a. **NRI Festival** – During December 2005, we had a 50 concert series of music and classical dance. Artistes from the US, Australia, London, Dubai and Singapore took part with enthusiasm. This year, we plan even more concerts as we are under pressure and many more of our fellow citizens want to perform in HAMSADHWANI in view of its global speed.
- b. **Hindustani Festival** – During January 2006, we had 10 Hindustani concerts from artistes of repute from the North. Lakshmi Sankar of international fame who lives in the U.S. performs every year for us. This is our regular annual feature.
- c. **Music festival** – At our marathon series of Carnatic music concerts, which began on Pongal day January 14, 2006, all leading artistes took part, like Bombay Jayshree, Sudha Raganathan, Unikrishnan, O.S. Thyagarajan, N. Ravikiran, T.N. Krishnan, Aruna Sairam, T.V. Sankaranarayanan, T.N. Seshagopalan, N. Ramani. We presented more than 50 junior and promising artistes as well.
- d. **Harikatha** – Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan gave us a musical version of Kamba Ramayanam for 5 days from 05.04.2006 to 09.04.2006 coinciding with Sri Rama Navami. This year we plan more such expositions by scholars.
- e. **Sri Purandaradasar Day** – We observe Sri Purandara Daasa day every year. The popular Mambalam sisters sang Daasar kritis exclusively on March 3, 2006.
- f. **Special Monthly Programme** – To pay homage to Bharath Ratna M.S. Subbalakshmi, we held special monthly concerts on the day of her birth star Bharani throughout 2005, her actual birthday being December 10. On December 11, 2005 our whole festival dedicated to M.S. Subbalakshmi began with a guitar-sitar concert by Dr. Kamala Shankar and Rajeev Janardhan. On December 12, Dr. Geetha Kasthuri presented a dance ballet titled “Isai Arasikku Oru Isai Anjali”.
- g. **Meenakshi Hariharan Trust** – Our foremost patron member Sri. M.R. Hariharan has instituted a trust fund of Rs. 4 lacs in favour of Hamsadhwani in memory of his wife. The object is to give cash grants to needy vidwans, apart from concerts dedicated to Purandara Daasa, Dikshithar and K.V. Narayanaswamy and a 5-concert guru-sishya parampara series.

HAMSADHWANI welcomes Trust funds from members and sponsors so that we can render assistance to more scholars and musicologists. Donations to award music competition prizes are welcome.

- h. We celebrated Thyagaraja day with the singing of Pancha Rathna kritis before an overflowing audience on the evening of January 25, 2006. Vidwans were

unanimous that it was the best aradhana they had participated in Chennai. It was sponsored by the Lion's Club, thanks to Akhila Ramajayam and Balasubramaniam. On January 19, 2006 Bombay Jayashree sang Sri Thyagaraja's rakthi raga kritis exclusively.

- i. It is our keen desire to hold concerts for great composers like Shyama Sastri, Swathi Tirunal and Papanasam Sivam.
- j. Hearing System – Music is through sound. Sound has to carry from the voice (or musical instruments) through quality musical systems (gadgets) efficiently. We invested nearly Rs. 1.50 lacs on equipment imported from Singapore.

But for the support and sponsorship from citizens and institutions, HAMSADHWANI could not have reached this eminent status. We receive tremendous backing thanks to our transparency.

The festival which began on December 10, 2005 and concluded on April 15, 2006 had some major features: -

- a) The 13th. NRI festival was inaugurated on December 11, 2005 by Mr. N. Murali, Managing Director, The Hindu who was felicitated on his choice as President of the Music Academy. Ms. Mahvash Siddique, U.S. Vice Consul, was the guest of Honour, Ms. Sita ravi, Editor "Kalki" presided.
- b) The 16th. Annual Music Festival was inaugurated on Pongal Day – January 14, 2006 by Mr. P. Obul Reddy, industrialist, Mr. T.S. Narayanaswamy CMD, Indian Overseas Bank presided, Mr. L Sabaratnam was the Chief Guest.
- c) Purandaradaasa day was celebrated on March 3, 2006 under the presidentship of Mr. S.Mohan, Former Supreme Court Judge. Dr. S.S. Badrinath, Chairman Sankara Netralaya was the Guest of Honour.
- d) Dr. Nalli Kuppaswami Chetty inaugurated the Kamba Ramayana Harikatha series by T.N. Seshagopalan, in association with our Vice President Mr. M. Murali of Krishna Sweets. We had 12 special monthly concerts for the year. Sri Krishna Sweets organized a get together on August 18, 2005 at which we honoured Mr. M.B.Niramal, Founder President EXNORA as Citizen of the Year. Mr. N. Ravi, Editor, The Hindu, inaugurated it. Mr. S. Appaswamy, Chairman Residency Group of Hotels presided.

Sriram Group promotes young talent every year through Hamsadhwani. Their 15 panel artistes (including six from Mumbai) performed in May and June 2006.

We plan to celebrate the birth anniversary of Tiruvengadu Subramaniam Pillai, Nadaswara Vidwan, with a series of concerts, thanks to a grant from the Union Ministry of Culture.

Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar's 116th. Birthday was celebrated on June 19, 2006 with a concert by Sikkil Gurucharan in association with the Ariyakudi Foundation sponsored by his grandson Ramanujam.

The 98th. Birthday of Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer was marked by a special concert by S. Sowmya on July 25, 2006.