

## SRUTI BOX

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### On tour with Chaurasia

The *Sruti* issue (August 2018) on Hindustani flute maestro Hariprasad Chaurasia brought back memories of a memorable month long tour with daily concerts at the Theatre de la Ville in Paris in 1973. That was probably his first Paris tour with Shivkumar Sharma (santoor) and 30 other Indian artists. Shanta and I were also part of that large contingent (see photo) and it was a great experience to participate in a three-hour show of Indian performing arts. All our concerts drew full houses. Every week we also had a matinee show on Saturday; making it seven shows a week for four weeks.

From among the 30 or so artists, only Hariprasad Chaurasia, Shivkumar Sharma, Shanta and I (along with our accompanists) were selected to tour

several European cities and a few places in France. We have nostalgic memories of that tour where we shared a common platform. From that day to this date we have been good friends and occasionally meet during arts festivals around the country or when Hariji performs in Chennai. Hariprasad Chaurasia charms people not only with his bansuri but also with his childlike smile and friendly behaviour.

*V.P. Dhananjayan*  
Chennai

### Malladi Brothers

The article on Sripada Pinakapani, his disciples and the epoch of Carnatic music in Andhra Pradesh in the June issue of *Sruti* was well presented. Dr. Pinakapani, a legend, was a giant in Carnatic music. He brought the Tanjore bani to

Andhra and his disciples Voleti Venkateswarulu, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, Nookala Chinna Sathyanarayana, and Malladi Suri Babu have passed on the treasure to the highly gifted and talented sons of Suri Babu—Sreeramaprasad and Ravikumar. The spiritual value of the song, the raga, tala and guru bhakti are the essence of their music along with their golden voice. The simplicity with which they follow the path of their gurus and their parents is the secret of their success. The disciplined life they lead is the background for their enchanting music and personalities. In concerts, they render the songs with correct pronunciation and emotion, and create vibrations that fill the concert hall and the hearts of the audience.

*Vijaya Raju*  
New Delhi

(Standing L to R): Hariharan, Adyar Gopinath, Mayadhar Raut, Madurai Sethuraman, T.M. Sreedharan, V.P. Dhananjayan, John Mercure, Birju Maharaj, Shivkumar Sharma, Hariprasad Chaurasia. (Sitting L to R): Alarmel Valli, Shanta Dhananjayan, Aloka Panikkar, Shovana Narayan with other artists at the Theatre de la Ville, Paris (1973)



## Harmonium in 78 rpm

I have been fascinated by the harmonium ever since my teens and when I heard the late Vasanthi Mhapsekar as an accompanist, I was awestruck. And when my idol Lakshmi Shankar said, "She is no less than any vocalist, man or woman", I was elated that my impression was 'firsted' by such an artist.

I have not heard the harmonium of Rambhau Bijapure but I am familiar with the voices of his gurus mentioned (Sruti July 2018), from my 78 rpm records. Neelkanth Gadgoli, Mallikarjun Mansur, Ramkrishnabua Vaze (singing Bolre papihara! ). And ten of those vocalists he accompanied. True, these last for only three odd minutes, but were recorded in their prime. And in time some of them lost their chaste simplicity. A pity.

**V.A.K. Ranga Rao**  
Chennai

## Aruna Sairam

While congratulating Aruna Sairam on ascending the Sangita Kalanidhi podium I must confess that she is not a dilettante's delight. She has a wide following and I know there are many

who will swear by her. But then there are also a number of connoisseurs who feel she is too full of gimmicks and a trifle too loud. Maybe that is my perception. With quality music on the decline and discerning ears on the wane (there are exceptions of course but very few) the trend is to search for someone who has to be annually awarded. There are no more giants in the field.

**T. Santhanam**  
by email

## Changes in the order

A couple of remarks regarding Sakuntala Narasimhan's debate on 'Challenges to artistic conventions' (Sruti, September 2018). On the changes in the traditional order of compositions my guess is that it was indeed a botch up by the staff, not the original musicians. T.M. Krishna has been breaking tradition in some ways and is still attracting large audiences. So, rasikas do not seem to mind, if not welcome, the changes. My comments were published in *Sruti Box* some years ago, comparing Krishna's changes to a reordering of the traditional Tamil dinner menu.

**R. Narasimhan**  
Chennai

## Corrections

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❖ This is the photo of the Tirumale Sisters who sang for Lalitha Srinivasan, not the one published on p. 33.



❖ The jatre was held at Hassan, not Jog (p.30). Musicologist Dr. R. Sathyanarayana (not B.V.K. Sastry) counselled Lalitha Srinivasan to learn from Venkatalakshamma (p.32). *Samudra Geethegalu* is by V.K. Gokak (p. 34).

## Obituary

Ranganayaki Rajagopalan (86), veteran veena vidushi, passed away on 20 September 2018. She was one of the torchbearers of the Karaikudi style of veena playing.



Uma Sriram, Bharatanrityam dancer, teacher at Nrithyodaya, seniormost disciple of Padma Subrahmanyam, and mother of dancer-musician Gayatri Kannan, passed away on 11 July in Chennai.

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