



SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2018

FROM THE EDITOR



October has been the month of quite a few anniversaries at *Sruti*. The founder-editor N. Pattabhi Raman was born on 24 October 1932 and the magazine in October 1983. Years after Pattabhi Raman's death, The Sanmar Group formally took over the running of the magazine in October 2006, the same month the present incumbent retired from the group and joined *Sruti* as editor.

Elsewhere in this issue, we have traced the magazine's growth in a self-congratulatory tone, but it is also time to remember some of the stalwarts, especially those who have contributed editorially to *Sruti*, or enriched it with their artistic expertise and wisdom through the decades, making it what it is today. If Pattabhi Raman's seniors in his family lent him solid support, mostly moral, but also in the form of sage advice from time to time, many artists, art-scholars, art administrators and historians, and bureaucrats made valuable contributions to the character and personality of the magazine.

The writers of articles—both topical and general interest—who give *Sruti* its distinctive stylistics, have been distributed not only all over India but overseas as well. One of our stellar correspondents specialising in Indian classical dance was Nala Najan an American who came to south India to learn Bharatanatyam in the 1940s. His mentor Mohan Khokar was another outstanding resource for *Sruti*. S.P. Sundaram of Montreal was a valuable contributor of news and notes from the western hemisphere and a great friend of *Sruti*. Other correspondents from Canada were Mamata and Harbans Nakra. In recent years, the German born Carnatic flautist and music historian Ludwig Pesch has served to maintain *Sruti*'s presence in Europe as a window to

India's performing arts, while Shankar Ramachandran has been an insightful commentator based in the US. The learned S.K. Saxena was *Sruti's* pride in Delhi for long, with his deep erudition and liberal vision in matters musical, northern as well as southern, and Manna Srinivasan was our ambassador at large in the capital region, a bridge between south Indian artists and officialdom. His despatches were known for their empathy for both performer and impresario, young talent as well as mature maestro. S.V. Seshadri aka Aeolus combined style and substance. Leela Venkataraman has been our veteran dance critic, also operating out of Delhi, while scholarwriter Sunil Kothari is the roving critic, jet-setting across the globe. In Bengaluru scholar and critic B.V.K. Sastry was an asset as is Sakuntala Narasimhan now.

Back at its headquarters, *Sruti* has been blessed with a whole battery of experts. Starting with the likes of resident sage T. Sankaran, versatile genius S. Rajam, Telugu poet, playwright and lyricist Arudra, polymath Pappu Venugopala Rao, the hard-to-please researcher-musician-musicologist N. Ramanathan, musician and writer Sulochana Pattabhi Raman, two Krishnans of varied scholarly and intellectual backgrounds—M, the naturalistcolumnist-artist, and S, the writer-translator; musicologist B.M. Sundaram, vidushi R. Vedavalli, dance writer Nandini Ramani, P.C. Jayaraman, V.S. Sundara Rajan and son V.S. Kumar, Lakshmi Devnath and many more brilliant minds, not to mention top musicians and dancers of the day that congregated at Alapana, the *Sruti* office, created an effulgent if idiosyncratic amalgam that defined *Sruti* and helped it to transcend the mundane cares of niche journalism.

K.S. Kalidas, T.T. Narendran, Lakshmi Sreeram, Savita Narasimhan and Mannarkoil J. Balaji are performing musicians who have brought a touch of class to our pages with their depth and clarity of expression. Bharatanatyam dancer Anjana Anand is another belonging to this category of contributors. Art critic V. Karpagalakshmi has over the years focussed on critiquing and encouraging young talent. Some other names that come to mind are Sulochana Saralaya, Kusuma Rao and Srilatha Krishna of Bengaluru, Gayatri Sundaresan, then of Chennai, later Mumbai, R. Sethuraman, Vimala Sarma, K. Subhadra Murthy, the towering Deepak Raja (our Hindustani music expert) and the many splendoured Manohar Parnerkar, all from Mumbai, and of course our sterling contributors from Bengal and the northeast—Meena Banerjee, Mitra Phukan, Nita Vidyarthi and Tapati Chowdhurie.

From Kerala, we have had some knowledgeable correspondents starting from S. Umamaheswaran, followed over the years by Shyamala Surendran, and K.K. Gopalakrishnan, the Kathakali and Koodiyattam specialist. S. Sivaramakrishnan and more recently C. Ramakrishnan have brought to light many splendid Carnatic musicians from Kerala.

This is by no means a complete list nor even a proper acknowledgement of the substantial role played by each of these excellent writers who have approached their work for *Sruti* in a spirit of loving service to the arts. We shall continue to recognize the work of more such contributors to the *Sruti* cause in the next few issues. Meanwhile, a big thank you to all who have made our journey so far possible.

V. RAMNARAYAN

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