

PRESS RELEASE

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest in the 128th Birth Anniversary function of Brahmasri Papanasam Sivan

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest in the 128th Birth Anniversary function of Brahmasri Papanasam Sivan organised by Papanasam Sivan Rasikar Sangam and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore, Chennai today (26.09.2018).

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am extremely delighted to be participating in the 128th birth anniversary of Sri Papanasam Sivan, the prolific composer and prectioner of Carnatic music about whom all of us are proud of.

The dawn of 20th century brought about a cultural awakening in the nation. The Carnatic music world contributed many greats to the cultured tapestry of India among whom the most notable are Uthukadu Venkatakavi, Muthiah Bhagavata, Mahavaidyanatha Sivan, Neelakanta Sivan and, Sri Papanasam Sivan.

It will not be an exaggeration to state that among all of them Sri Papanasam Sivan was responsible for a transformational change in the field of Carnatic music in the sense that his spontaneous compositions had a wide range – from Varnam to Mangalam and included padams and jaavalismainly used in classical dance forms. Rarely has any other composer laid out such a comprehensive menu for the musicians. He was therefore rightly titled as "Tamizh Thyagayya" by the lovers of Carnatic music.

His well structured compositions are soaked in simple devotional content and are of high musical value. His connect to His Almighty was unique and sublime. He has described God's beauty, extolled His virtues, pleaded to God with absolute Bhakthi, has demanded God's grace with liberty, has chided God for not alleviating his miseries and has even made fun of God for being busy without paying attention to his devotees.

“Kana Kannkodi Vendum” (कना कणकोडि वेन्दुम) in Kambodi, “Karthikeya” in Thodi, “Enadu Manam” in Harikhamboji, “Pichaikkuvandeero” in Surutti are some of the sterling examples of the above facets expressed in his compositions.

Though from the 16th century onwards, we have had many Tamil composers in Carnatic Music, it was Shri Sivan who produced a volume of Tamil compositions which matched Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshatar in volume and substance. Just as Italian was considered the most suitable language for western classical and operatic music, Telugu and Sanskrit compositions dominated the Carnatic Music concert platforms of South India for nearly 2 centuries. With the arrival of Sivan’s compositions, musicians could not resist singing his simple yet very elegantly structured Tamil compositions with rich emotive content, as they ensured an instant connect with the many Carnatic rasikas who only knew Tamil. Thus Sri Sivan’s compositions gave a great fillip to the Tamizh Isai movement through his repertoire of songs for concert platforms.

Shri Sivan had mastery over Sanskrit as well, and has composed over 60 Sanskrit songs. He was conferred the titles of “Upaadhyayaa” and “Vaiyaakarani” from the Maharaja’s College of Sanskrit in Trivandrum.

Noticing this multifaceted genius the Tamil film world instantly embraced Sri Papanasam Sivan. He not only composed the songs but also set the tunes for several films. Some of his film lyrics could easily pass off as compositions worthy enough to be sung at Carnatic Music platforms. I am told that during those days, his popularity reached such great heights that labourers and rickshaw pullers who had no exposure to classical music would hum the tunes of the film songs composed by him.

Recognizing his immense talent Smt. Rukmani Arundale, the founder of Kalakshethra brought him to teach music in her institution. She herself was his ardent student. Sri Sivan’s days in Kalakshetrawere immensely satisfying to him and it appears that it was his admiration for Smt Rukmini Arundale that prompted him to name his daughter as Rukmini.

Long time Mylapore residents fondly recall that several front ranking artists of those days like Prof Ramanathan, D K Jayaraman used to

accompany him on the Margazhi bhajans around the four Mada Veedhis. It is indeed fitting that we are paying tributes to him at this Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, which is situated in the heart of the same Mada Veedhis.

The awards and titles heaped on Sri Sivan were innumerable. The Music Academy and Sangeet Natak Academy conferred their highest awards on him. The most venerated pontiff of Kanchi Mutt His Holiness Paramacharya blessed him with the title `Siva Punya Ganamani", at his 60th birthday celebrations. The Government of India honoured him with the 'Padma Bhushan'.

Sri Sivan was a great patriot. He had great love and respect for Sri Subramania Bharathi. The patriotic songs that figured in movies like Thyaga Bhoomi bear testimony to this. His song "Desa sevai seyva vareer" evocatively sung by the doyen Smt D K Pattammal.

Though Sivan did not have many direct disciples doing 'gurukulavasam' under him, musical wizards like Madurai Mani Iyer, Dandapanidesikar, Musiri SubramaniaIyer, Dr.Ramanathan, Lalgudi Jayaraman, D.K. Jayaraman, M.S.Subbulakshmi and D.K. Patammal learnt music at one time or the other under this great master.

Tiruvalluvar asks in his second couplet, 'Of what avail is all of one's learning, if one does not worship the sacred feet of Him who is of perfect Intelligence?'

Similarly, for Papanasam Sivan, the goal of all his musical striving and seeking was the ultimate experience of the Divine!

His appearance, just a cloth tied around his waist, his forehead strewn with sacred ash, the rudraksha garland around his neck made people recognize him as Sivan. When he stayed with his elder brother for a time in Papanasam, Polagam Ramiah was for ever to become Papanasam Sivan!

Today, with a myriad of compositions of Papanasam Sivan having been rendered by the greatest of Carnatic music performers, Sri Sivan himself is not only a role model whom every performer should follow, but also an inspirational personality to music lovers and rasikas.

Sri Papanasam Sivan is a personality from whom all of us can benefit in some way. We should study his compositions, his times, his life more and more so that we can draw inspiration for our own times.

I congratulate the Papanasam Sivan Rasigar Sangam for organising this function. Carnatic Music, Film Music, and Tamil language have been greatly benefitted by the contributions of composers like Sri Papanasam Sivan. It is our duty to treasure their contributions and pass them as to succeeding generations with the same favour and passion with which they were composed. My Best wishes to all the enlightened souls who pursue these endeavours.”

On this occasion, Thiru. N. Murali, President Music Academy and Chairman, Kasturi & Sons Ltd., Thiru. K. N. Ramaswamy, Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Thiru. V. Vaidyanathan, Vice-President, Papanasam Sivan Rasikar Sangam, Thiru. Ashok Ramani, Secretary, Papanasam Sivan Rasikar Sangam, Thirumathi Rukmini Ramani, President, Papanasam Sivan Rasikar Sangam, Thiru. Udayalur Kalyanaraman, Recipient of “Sivanisai Selvar Award” and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai -22

Date : 26.09.2018

Sd/-

Joint Director (PR)