

Arsha Kala Bhushanam Awards Function

Arsha Kala Arangam, the cultural wing of Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti held Arsha Kala Bhushanam awards function on 7.11.10 at Kikani Higher Secondary School, Coimbatore. Around 1500 persons participated.

The function started with prayer by Kumari Darshana and Kumari Sowmya. Smt. Anuradha Sriram, Anchor, welcomed the gathering.

The awardees were ceremonially welcomed to the stage with auspicious music, Vedic chant, dance and royal umbrella.

Smt Anuradha Sriram introduced the awardees to the audience. A small slide show on the life and achievements of all the awardees were presented.

Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi conferred the title "Arsha Kala Bhushanam" on Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam (Bharatanatyam), Dr. T.R. Subramanyam (Vocal), Sri T.K. Govinda Rao (Vocal), Sri M.P.N. Ponnusamy (Nadaswaram) and Valayapatti Sri A.R. Subramaniam (Thavil). Pujya Swamiji presented a citation with words written about the achievement of each awardee written personally by him and also a purse.

Sri N. Murali, Sr. Mg. Director, Kasturi & Sons and President, The Music Academy, Chennai, who was the Chief Guest, addressed the gathering. He said Pujya Swamiji was a role model to be emulated by other sages. The citation the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam gave captured the essence of each awardee's contribution. He appreciated the traditional way in which the awardees were welcomed. He told that he had not



Anuradha Sriram welcoming



Pujya Swamiji being received



Padma Subramanian receiving the award

seen such a traditional welcome even in Chennai. It was unique to present awards to so many artists on the same stage. It had been a truly humbling experience for him.

Pujya Swamiji then addressed the large gathering on “Spiritual growth and music”. He said: “Indian music is different from music from other cultures. Though music transcends language, culture and time and though notes are the same, Indian music is unique because it is evolved, sophisticated and melodies are defined. We don’t look at music as man-made. It has come from Isvara and it is the closest manifestation if Isvara; everything else is grosser”.

He said *nada* was so close to Isvara that only human voice or instruments could produce. “The greatest musical instrument given to a human being is the voice. There was a new thinking the lyric was not needed. It was right in some ways. But lyric was needed to take the person—the individual core—to Isvara, the total. The core person had to be met, invoked because humans always played one role or the other in life, as son or daughter, husband or wife, father or mother, etc. And in playing these roles, most humans suffered from hangover. To get over the same, music helped. “Lyric helps us invoke the core person. And, without lyric it is difficult to touch the core”, he said and added: “Lyrical music is the music of India”.

In South India, lyric was given importance or *pradhana*. While playing instruments, people would easily identify if the musician played a lyric. By honouring artistes, people were honouring themselves and a great heritage. It was a way of saluting the Rishis, he said.

Pujya Swamiji said: ‘when we honour the artists; we honour their Gurus and the classical tradition. The knowledge of music comes to us from Gandarva Veda. This knowledge like Brahma Vidya is also



Awardees with awards - with Pujya Swamiji



Sri Murali (of Hindu) with Ponnadai

received and given by Rishis. A person should be naturally endowed with talent in music. That talent can be honed by practice. Music transcends language, culture and time. Indian music is unique, highly evolved and sophisticated. Melodies are defined. We do not look at music as man made. We see music as a manifestation coming from Isvara himself.

Music will be soul satisfying only if it invokes the core person in one self. One plays different roles in life. It is only a point of view. But the core person is not those roles. He is the core person, the one connected to Isvara.

When we honour the awardees, we get honoured in the process. In this process we also honour our great heritage and Rishis. We can protect dharma only by protecting people following dharma. Similarly we can



Krishna Sweets Krishnan being garlanded by Pujya Swamiji

support Vidya only by supporting Vidwans. Music helps one to connect with Isvara and assist one's spiritual growth.

All the awardees in their acceptance speech thanked Pujya Swamiji for conferring the award on them. They felt more blessed by receiving the award from Guru's hands. They also assured that they would continue their service to art with much more vigour in future.

Pujya Swamiji thanked Maharajapuram Sri Ramachandran and Nagai Sri Muraleedharan for coordinating the activities of Arsha Kalarangam.

Pujya Swamiji honoured Sri N. Mahalingam and Sri S. Krishnan for generously sponsoring the event.

*Report by
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