

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of December Art Festival – 2019 organised by Brahma Gana Sabha

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of December Art Festival – 2019 organised by Brahma Gana Sabha at Smt. Sivagami Pethachi Auditorium, Mylapore, Chennai today (03.12.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "It gives me great pleasure to be here today to inaugurate the December Art Festival of Brahma Gana Sabha. I feel honoured to, confer titles on eminent artistes and address this distinguished gathering.

The aim of Union and State Government is to preserve this great cultural heritage of our civilisation. Such expositions will help to further this goal and make our youth experience and understand the traditional cultural treasures of our country. Programmes and cultural festivals of this kind will promote and rekindle in our youth an interest in our rich art forms. This will facilitate the continued transmission of our art forms to future generations.

The festivals such as these, serve the all-important purpose of bringing the performers of Classical arts closer to the people. These festivals provide a platform for budding artistes to exhibit their talent. It helps create awareness among the public and generates interest in the new generation about varied art forms by the expressions of different artistes.

An artiste establishes an identity for his culture and society. One is full of praise for the manner in which the city of Chennai has promoted Art and Music for several decades. No wonder that UNESCO has recognized this contribution of Chennai and has included it in the list of Heritage Centres which have creatively contributed to music. There are only two other cities of India in this list – Varanasi and Jaipur.

The world over, Dance and Music are expected to calm the mind and please the bodily senses. The Indian form of cultural expression goes one step further in that, it appeals to the soul. Music and Dance knows no barriers of caste, language or religion.

It appeals to the mind and the body. It calms the senses and harmonizes the functioning of our body. There is a branch of medicine which attempts to heal diseases through music. In our ancient and classical form of music different ragas were meant to be sung at different times of the day considering the effect they had on our senses. Thus rag 'Bhoopal' is to be sung at the time of waking up early in the morning and rag 'Neelambari' at the time of going to sleep late in the evening.

Carnatic Classical Music has a huge audience across the globe. The secret of its vitality is its growth without losing its purity and pristine form.

The ancient grammatical work Tholkappiyam (தொல்காப்பியம்) mentions the various musical expressions pertaining to the five landscapes of the Sangam literature. The five landscapes such as Neithal, Marutham etc. are associated with a particular theme and to give colour to those themes, each has a musical mood, a stringed instrument and a percussion instrument attached to it.

The Lute and the Flute were the most popular musical instruments during the Sangam period. One of the Pathupattu anthologies describes the process of making the flute and as to how the holes in the bamboo tube were to be bored using red-hot embers.

The Murasu (மூரசு), or the Drum was the most popular percussion instrument. During festivals, the sound of Murasu (மூரசு) conveyed joy and gaiety. The Drum was also used during wars for calling people to fight the enemy. Another well-known percussion instrument was the Mridangam (Mathangam). This was to accompany the Veena and the Flute among other instruments, in a musical concert.

The Carnatic musical form is based upon a complex and structured arrangement. The Ragas are based on the seven notes of the scale which are Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Nee. The Thalam is the rhythmic foundation of Carnatic music. The Varnam, the Kritis and the Alapana form different sections of a Carnatic music recital. The special element of Carnatic music has been the spiritual content of the rendering. The devotional element in the music makes it unique and divine. Hence Carnatic music performances become soul stirring in character when they are rendered with devotion and reverence to the art form.

Purandara Dasa, who lived in the 15th and 16th Centuries, is credited with the codification of Carnatic Music. He was also a great composer and thousands of songs are attributed to him. After him came a great theorist of Carnatic Music Venkata Mukhi, who developed the system of classifying the ragas of Carnatic Music.

As the Carnatic Music form evolved, it attained its peak in the 18th Century when the 'Trinity' of Thyagaraja Swamikal, Shamashastrri and Muthuswami Dikshitar composed their unforgettable compositions. Subsequently it was enriched by many other great composers like, Papanasam Sivan, Swati Thirunal and Annamacharya.

Lord Nataraja is first invoked in all dance recitals all over Tamil Nadu as a mark of respect and reverence.

From times immemorial, Drama formed one of the three components of Tamil expression. There is evidence in ancient Tamil literature for specifications about the physical dimensions of the stage. The Drama was in existence when the Thirukkural was written, is seen from the kural where Thiruvalluvar has referred to the analogy of people thronging to the stage and disappearing as soon as the dance is over, when explaining the fleeting nature of wealth.

The stage was used for dance drama mainly in those days and the dancers for whom stage acting was a hereditary avocation are referred to by Ilango Adigal also. The singers who accompanied them on stage are also referred to as 'Paanar'. During the period of the Bhakthi Movement in the later part of the first millennium, Dance Dramas were performed on stage on the Puranas and in the form of offering thanks to God Almighty for the bountiful gifts of Nature.

The break from this practice and the rejuvenation of Tamil drama was brought about by Sankaradas Swamikal and Pammal Sambanda Mudaliar. During this period, drama troupes were mainly run with young boys called the "Boys Companies". These boys stayed permanently in the Troupe's Quarters in the typical "Gurukulavasam" style. They were given training in acting, voice modulation, singing etc. It is important to recall that the two legendry actors of the film world Thiru. M.G.Ramachandran and Thiru. Sivaji Ganesan honed their acting skills initially in such drama companies.

I am happy that veteran artistes such as Hyderabad Brothers - Thiru Raghava Chary and Thiru Sesha Chary, who have received Gaana Padhmam, Thirumathi Urmila

Sathyannarayanan received Naatya Padhmam, Thiru Visu received Naataka Padhmam, Thiru T.R Subhramanian received Vaadhya Padhmam have been honoured today.

I congratulate them and also extend my best wishes who have been chosen for their significant contributions in their respective fields. I convey my warm felicitations to all the recipients of Titles, participating artistes and to all the Rasikas. I wish them well. I take this opportunity to request the youth to follow these Roll Models and enrich the tradition of Carnatic Music and become Ambassador of India to world.

I congratulate the President, the Secretary and other members of Brahma Gana Sabha who have taken special efforts to organize this cultural feast year after year without fail. This is the 51 year of the programme. I am certain that such noble initiatives will be carried forward in the future with greater strength and vigour. And soon they will celebrate Diamond Jubilee. I extend my best wishes and greetings to them. May Lord Nataraja bless them and may success greet them at every step along the way.”

On this occasion, Padmashri Thiru. Nalli Kuppaswami Chettiar, President, Brahma Gana Sabha, Thiru. V. Narasimhan, President, Aasthika Samajam, Thiru. S. Ravichandran, Secretary, Brahma Gana Sabha, Thiru. K. Mahalingam, Treasurer, Brahma Gana Sabha and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Date : 03.12.2019

Sd/-

Joint Director (PR)