



BIOGRAPHIES OF 2020 ADJUDICATORS

Anubrata Chatterjee



Son of the world-renowned Tabla maestro, Pt. Anindo Chatterjee, Anubrata Chatterjee was nurtured from a very tender age to be a Tabla player. He had the rare fortune of being the youngest and the last "Ganda-Bandh" disciple of the great guru, Padmabhushan - Deshkottam Jnan Prakash Ghosh in 1992. Subsequently, Anubrata continued his training under the gifted tutelage of his father focusing on Farukhabad Gharana along with Lucknow and Ajrada Gharana styles.

Anubrata has proved himself, both as a soloist and as an accompanist, by his consummate Tabla renditions. Taking the 'parampara' forward, he has built upon his father's style and expanded his own repertoire to display an amalgamation of power, grace, skill and superb tonal clarity.

Anubrata had performed at some of the most prestigious international venues and festivals held across the world, including BBC World Radio (United Kingdom [UK]), where he made his international debut in 1991, Carnegie Hall and John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (United

States of America [USA]), Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay (Singapore), Dubrovnic Festival (Croatia) and Namaste India Festival (Japan) amongst many others. He also had the privilege to perform for the then Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh in Mumbai in 2012.

Taking after his father, Anubrata places great importance in imparting quality training to his students. He holds regular workshops in New York City at the Music Academy for Tabla Research by Anindo Chatterjee, where the focus is to teach the art all over world. He also conducted numerous advanced training workshops in Japan for many students.

While being deeply rooted in the traditional style of playing, Anubrata understands the need to be contemporary and hence actively collaborates on projects that are traditional yet new age. This includes forming a unique percussion group named Taal-India, which is represented by percussion instruments from every region of the country. Anubrata's collaborations and the fusion bands that he is a part of are well-regarded in the world music scene.



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Anubrata was conferred the Basavaraj Rajguru Award in 2014 and the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Yuva Award in 2016.

Embar Kannan



Embar Kannan is renowned in the art of expression through his mellifluous music on the Violin. He inherited the mantle of the illustrious Embar family from his parents and is acknowledged as a Violinist par excellence. Kannan is recognised as an 'A-Top' Grade artist by All India Radio, a recognition accorded to top ranking artists. Although he holds a postgraduate degree in commerce from the Madras University, music has been his *raison d'être*.

Kannan hails from a family of musicians. He took to the stringed instrument at the tender age of six. He had his initial training in Carnatic music under Sri Subbanna Bhagavatar and Vittal Ramamurthy, and in Western Classical Music under music director, Diwakar master. He then continued his formal training in Violin under Kum. Kanyakumari after receiving a talent scholarship from the Government

of India. Since then, he has collaborated extensively with many distinguished musicians and performed at numerous music concerts and festivals across the world, including Spain, Morocco and Norway.

He is universally acclaimed as a Violinist with extraordinary bowing quality and remarkably sweet playing. Kannan's style is marked by clarity, soulfulness and energy. Subbudu, the doyen among critics, recognised him as a prized jewel of Carnatic music as early as 1991. He remarked that Kannan's music has the grace and ease of a Russian Ballerina.

Violinists shoulder a unique place in Carnatic music. As concert accompanists, they shoulder the twin responsibilities of seamlessly synchronising with the vocalists while retaining their individual identities. Kannan's flair in this aspect has made him one of the most coveted accompanists in his time.

Kannan received the Best Violinist Award from the Madras Music Academy from 1991 to 1999 and subsequently in 2004 and 2006. In 2009, he was a recipient of the Kalaimamani Award from the Government of Tamil Nadu. Most recently, in 2018, Kannan was conferred the Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu Award by Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha.



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Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh



Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh is India's torch bearer worldwide for Saraswathi Veena, the National Instrument of India. Her rich lineage of music can be traced back six generations and her prodigious musical journey began at the age of three under her mother Vidushi Lalgudi. R. Rajalakshmi. She then left home to live with her guru Vidushi Padmavathi Ananthagopalan for 22 years, where she learnt the intricate science and art of playing the Veena. Her playing technique was further enhanced under the tutelage of Veena virtuoso Dr. S. Balachander. As an artist, collaborator, composer, researcher, creator, pioneer and educator, Jayanthi's life achievements over the last 35 years truly embodies the rich musical heritage of India. This makes her one of the legendary Veena masters that India has ever produced.

Apart from several prestigious venues and festivals in India, Jayanthi has performed at many international festivals, including the San Francisco Jazz Festival,

Darbar Festival London, Adelaide Music Festival, BBC Proms London and at prestigious venues such as United Nations in New York, the Palladium in Indiana and Théâtre de la Ville in Paris.

Jayanthi is the founder of the Indian National Orchestra, featuring 21 star musicians from all over India – the first of its kind for Indian Classical Music. Her album Mysterious Duality where one artist and one instrument created a philharmonic effect, was ground-breaking. Her web series Cup O' Carnatic popularises Carnatic music and the Veena, achieving more than 2 million views on social media. Jayanthi also holds a Doctorate for her research on the styles and playing techniques of the Saraswathi Veena. Her series of talks and lecture-demonstrations in various schools, universities and TEDx platforms have made her a popular ambassador of Indian Music among the younger generation.

Jayanthi has dedicated her life to the Saraswathi Veena. Her playing style truly brings out the voice of the Veena, in terms of originality in content, technique, virtuosity and expression that transcends the boundaries of language and region.



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Mannargudi A. Easwaran



Mannargudi A. Easwaran is a front ranking Mridangam artist of India, with an outstanding and commendable career spanning 64 years. As one of the most reputed and accomplished Mridangam artists of India, Easwaran's exemplary ability to enhance, embellish and admirably blend with any style of music has enabled him to carve a niche for himself in the music field.

Born into the illustrious family of the great Sanskrit Scholar Appayya Dikshitar, Easwaran started learning Mridangam at the age of eight under Kuniseri Sri U. Krishnamani Iyer and later under Guruvayur Sri. Durai. His playing style is marked by brilliance, precision, subtlety, excellent tonal quality, spontaneity and is a perfect and harmonious blend of grammar and aesthetics. Thus, Easwaran is a much sought-after accompanist in the music field.

Since 1972, Easwaran has performed extensively worldwide in countries including the USA, Canada, UK,

Singapore, Malaysia, France, Australia and Japan, amongst many others. He has performed as an accompanist to several top-ranking artists both in India and abroad – from the maestros of yesteryears to the young stars of today. Easwaran has served the All India Radio as a staff artist for 23 years and is also a top ranked artist of All Radio India and Doordarshan. He retired as a 'Grade One' instrumentalist. Easwaran had the rare privilege to take part in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Indian Independence held at Red Fort, New Delhi in 1972.

Easwaran is a recipient of several coveted awards including the Sangeet Natak Akademi award from the Government of India in 2008 and the Kalaimamani award by The Government of Tamil Nadu in 2003.

Easwaran has always had a penchant for teaching and has been doing extensive research in this area too. He has devised many unique techniques and formulated a scientific approach to teaching the art of Mridangam. Easwaran was invited to teach Mridangam as a Visiting Professor at the San Francisco State University in 1979 and at the Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Kalluri in 2002 and 2003. He has been grooming many students, some of whom have made their mark in the concert arena as promising artists.



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Rais Bale Khan



Rais Bale Khan is an accredited artist of All India Radio and Doordarshan, in Sitar and Hindustani Vocal. His versatility in singing khayal, thumri, ghazal, kannada vachanas, dasara pads, nirgun bhajans and Marathi abhangs has won him appreciation by many music lovers.

Rais belongs to the Kirana and Dharwad Gharana. He hails from the illustrious family of late “Sitar Ratna” Rahimat Khan, a legendary Beenkar and Sitariya. The title of “Sitar Ratna” was conferred on Rahimat Khan by the then Maharaja of Mysore who was a great patron of music. Rais is the great-grandson of Rahimat Khan, and is a seventh generation artist in his family lineage.

Rais learnt the art of Sitar playing from a young age in gurukul system from his grandfather, Prof Abdul Karim Khan, and father, Ustaaad Bale Khan, who was an internationally renowned Sitarist. The credit of popularising Sitar in South India goes to his forefathers.

Rais is a gold medallist with a postgraduate degree in instrumental music (Sitar) from Karnataka University, Dharwad. Dharwad is known as the citadel of Hindustani music and he is one of the proud inheritors

of Dharwad’s rich musical heritage. His rendition is marked by soothing aalap, systematic delineation of raaga, aesthetic nuances of gaayaki and all in the khandani baat (which was described as Rahematkhani baat by musicologists of his great-grandfather's time).

As an engrossing musical dialogue, Rais and his younger brother, Hafiz, have won wide acclaim in India and abroad. Their musical journey has taken them to the USA, UK, Kuwait, Iran and Singapore. One particularly enriching experience was performing with the well-known French pianist, Phillip Fennice.

Rais runs Saptak School of Indian Music in Pune, Maharashtra and is a dedicated music teacher. He has also founded the Suhana Basant Foundation in Pune, Maharashtra to perpetuate the memory of his beloved father and guru, and propagate the noble cause of music to others.



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Shashank Subramanyam



Shashank Subramanyam, a Grammy-nominated exponent of the Flute, began performing to the public at the age of six in 1984. At the age of twelve, he was the youngest musician to have been invited by The Music Academy in Chennai to perform in the senior most slot. This is a record that has yet to be broken in the history of South Indian Music since it is often performed by legends of Indian Classical Music. Today, Shashank has over 70 CDs and several DVDs to his credit.

Trained by his father Subramanyam and legendary vocalists Palghat K.V. Narayanaswami and Pandit Jasraj in Hindustani Music, Shashank is presently considered one of the best Bamboo Flute artists by the Indian and international media. With scintillating, primal tones, he sings through the most organic and ancient of all instruments. His virtuosity is the result of a magical innate talent coupled with the best possible

training. Shashank has propelled the Bamboo Flute into an enviable position by his playing techniques, of which the multi flute transposed fingering technique and the dual octave production have won him world acclaim.

Now with over 30 years in the field of Indian Classical Music, Shashank has had many landmark concerts at prestigious institutions in different countries including Rashtrapathi Bhavan (The President's Palace at New Delhi), Smithsonian Institution, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Sage Gateshead. Additionally, he has collaborated with many legendary musicians from India and abroad, such as John McLaughlin, Paco De Lucia, Zakir Hussain and Ustad Sultan Khan. Performing extensively across the world, Shashank's music has enthralled audiences in countries including the USA, UK, South Africa, Singapore, China, Qatar, Australia and New Zealand, amongst many others.

Shashank is the youngest recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi's senior award in 2017 and is recognized as an 'A-Top' Grade artist by All India Radio and TV. He has also won many other prestigious awards throughout his career.



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Sudha Ragnathan



Sudha Ragnathan is one of India's foremost Carnatic Vocalists. A disciple of the legendary Padma Bhushan awardee Dr. ML Vasanthakumari, Sudha has evolved a style of her own. The soul of her music lies in the dynamism of presentation, coupled with exceptional motifs and matrices of raga images and swaras, making it a quintessential amalgam. Sudha has the distinction of being the only Carnatic musician, second to Bharat Ratna MS Subbulakshmi, to have sung at the United Nations. Her music echoed in the hall of the United Nations on 2 October 2016, the International Day of Non-Violence, 50 years after Dr. MS Subbulakshmi's music did in 1966.

As the voice and soul of Carnatic music, Sudha has contributed immensely to the increasing acceptance, awareness and 'hosannas' for music in its purest form. Her music has enthralled packed audiences at numerous global music festivals and concerts in prestigious venues across the world. Apart from her

performances, Sudha also conducts various workshops, lectures and summer schools beyond the shores of India to nurture talent and to pass on the legacy of Carnatic music. Fusion music and film music are important parts of Sudha's repertoire. Teaming with jazz wizard, Amit Heri, she has toured the USA and India. Having sung some very popular numbers in Tamil and Malayalam films, she is currently composing music for two Tamil films.

Keen to give back to society, Sudha launched the Samudhaaya Foundation in 1999, in which Sudha is the Founder and Managing Trustee. The Foundation, now in its 21st year of operation, has funded different causes such as palliative care and paediatric care for the underprivileged children, environmental restoration and socially vulnerable women.

Sudha has received more than 100 awards, including the Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award of India, which was conferred to her in 2015. She also holds leadership positions in several organisations in India.