

Sudha is doing her bit for society

Ranjani Govind

BANGALORE: Thousands of concerts, scores of albums, a choice of awards... what's new with vocalist Sudha Raghunathan that pulls her into this page once again?

"It's cool to catch up with my foray into world fusion and of course the activities of my Samudhaaya Foundation which is gaining momentum as it completes eight years of its inception," says the Carnatic vocalist.

"I am taking my efforts forward to see that music plays a key role in helping the sick heal with care. The endeavour will be better if several hands come together for the cause," says Ms. Raghunathan. "If the people of India think of donating a small amount of their earnings towards helping the diseased, it can do wonders," says the vocalist who is now in the city to take part in both Carnatic and fusion concerts.

Samudhaaya

"It was during the time of the Kargil war, when the media wrote heart-rending stories of people who needed help, that my husband Raghunathan and I started Samudhaaya. Being grateful to the



Sudha Raghunathan

honour and recognition that people have bestowed upon me in society, I want to repay and do my bit to charitable organisations by covering a wide spectrum of activities ranging from music to education and charity by arranging benefit concerts.

The benefits of the concerts have reached the Kargil Defence Personnel Relief

Her latest cause is to see that music plays a key role in helping the sick heal

Fund, Cyclone Relief in Orissa, Gujarat earthquake victims, several orphanages, cancer relief and spastic societies across India.

Saadhana

Samudhaaya also presents awards of excellence, Saadhana, to persons associated with selfless, outstanding service.

Ms. Raghunathan may be associated with the traditional Carnatic genre but only when she had attempted some *filmi* versions, she says, she realised her flair to take on the lighter side of celluloid melody. Similarly, only after she was prodded into being a part of world music did she explore her comfort level with fusion music.

Global Vocal Meeting

Ms. Raghunathan was selected as the Indian representative to participate in the Global Vocal Meeting in Germany where singers from different parts of the world

come together in an open musical space. Organised by Burghof, an academy of music and arts at Lorrach, the occasion also featured the Stimmen Voices International Vocal Festival where she was amongst singers from Madagascar, Mali, Hungary, Switzerland, and the U.S. "The Indian mix had the group singing and thumping the percussion for "Brahmam Okkate" and Madurai Mani Iyer's "English Note" after a week long practice. "Be it Bouli or Shankarabharana, world music is also built to sail around melody, and we take space to showcase our originality," says Ms. Raghunathan who takes part only with groups that come together after weeks of melodic exercise.

Ms. Raghunathan's recent participation at the fusion concert (leaning on rhythm) with the Royamount Foundation (near Paris) had Iranians, Africans and French jam with Indian meditative music. "It's only for 10 years that Carnatic is also being part of world fusion. I am happy to be propagating the Carnatic genre to people abroad who believe our music soothes and heals the soul," she says.