

Publication: Deccan Chronicle

Date: October 20, 2013

IT'S LIKE A NINE-DAY BANQUET

Navotsavam, a music festival on at the Music Academy, will showcase a range of genres and artists of renown

SHRUTI MENON
Deccan Chronicle

Chennai is one of the most thriving cultural hubs in the country. From art to dance to music to theatre, citizens get steeped in the arts, receptive to all the fine talents when they perform. Now that the city is in a festive mood, with Diwali round the corner, Navotsavam is being organised to celebrate the eclectic musical tastes of people in the city.

As part of its second season, this year, the music festival will feature Balamurali Krishna, Karthik, Rajesh Mandolin, Sivamani, Karaikudi Mani, Stephen Devassy and others. Sankara Narayanan, Business Head, Aircel says, "Aircel is

collaborating with SS International to present this one-of-a-kind musical extravaganza. We have about 15-16 artists delivering a variety of performances — from Hindustani to classical to instrumental. We want to celebrate the festive times, and what better way to do that than to celebrate with performances by such talented and renowned artists?"

Sivamani, one of the most popular percussionists in the country, is thrilled about sharing the stage with greats like Stephen Devassy and Karaikudi Mani. "It really is a big honour to play with the masters. We're all coming together for a great show. It's great to see a blend of classical, jazz, Hindustani and such music. The best part about appreciating music is learning to adapt and going with the flow of having different styles of music be part of the festival," says Sivamani.

Singer Nithyasree Mahadevan is no stranger to the Carnatic scene in



Karthik

the art and the artist."

Talking about this year's event, Nithyasree says, "I will be performing a Tamil composition. I'm excited to perform with Sowmya; we've been childhood friends and I'm looking forward to sharing the stage with her," she says with a smile, adding, "The best part about a festival like this is that it is packaged in a way that it not only reaches the core Carnatic rasikas, but also a wider audience."

Pianist Anil Srinivas will be collaborating with composer and flautist Rakesh Chaurasia and playback singer Shwetha Mohan. "Our idea is to feature the poetry of Bharatiyar — an unplugged performance. It will be a combination of Hindustani and western. Rakesh and I are, like, festival buddies and Shwetha needs no introduction. We enjoy performing and I'm looking forward to the festival. Chennai is the unofficial music capital of the country and there are a lot of younger audiences keen on listening to different genres of music. It's great to see different genres being appreciated across generations," he says.

Chennai and even performed at the first edition of the Navotsavam festival. She reminisces, "Last year, when I performed it was raining heavily; the entire city was flooded and many people were advised to stay indoors. But the people at SS International and I decided that the show must go on. The place was beautifully decorated and had a huge Thanjavur painting of Lord Balaji. I was ready to perform even if there were only 10 people. But to my surprise, around 500 people turned up. It was humbling to have so many people respect

Navotsavam, a nine-day Carnatic music festival, is being held at the Music Academy, T.T.K. Road, from October 19 to 28, at 6.30 pm.



Nithyasree



Anil



Sivamani

The best part about a festival like this is that it is packaged in a way that it not only reaches the core Carnatic rasikas, but also a wider audience

