**REPORT**

**Event: Two day national seminar on *Indian Music: Cultural and Philosophical Perspectives***

**Date and time: 25th & 26th February 2017, 9:00 hrs – 17:00 hrs.**

**Venue: K.J. Somaiya College of Engineering Auditorium.**

**Organized by: Department of Philosophy, SIES College of Arts, Science & Commerce, Sion (West) & Sri Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Vidyalaya**

**Broad Sub-Themes: Sama Veda, Folk Music, Bhajana, Sufi Music, , Varkari cult, Carnatic forms of Music, Hindustani Music, Tribal Music, Patriotic music, Music for entertainment, Music therapy etc.**

Right from the stage, adorned with 9 different musical instruments to the spectacular invocation chants, the goal of the seminar was made abundantly clear- an almost feverish devotion to music was going to permeate the air for the entirety of the two-day seminar! And what followed was a one-of-a-kind, musical-cum-philosophical spectacle, going by the audience responses.

The convener of the seminar, Dr. Uma Maheshwari Shankar( The Principal, SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce) set the tone for the proceedings by quoting Einstein (who once observed that he often ‘thought in music’) urging the audience to pursue music not just as a recreational tool but as a mode of thought and being itself. The convener’s address was followed by the Presidential address by Dr. V. Shankar (The President of SIES) who conveyed some insightful thoughts and heartfelt wishes through his speech. This was followed by the keynote address of Pt. Arvind Parikh who reflected on the contrasting modes of musical performances of olden days and contemporary times. Further, Dr. Susha Sheshayann , lit up the inaugural session by traversing the development of Indian Music through the ages.

The inaugural session was followed by a slew of lectures, talks, technical paper presentations and spectacular performances in both the main and the concurrent sessions. In the main sessions, several prominent scholars like Dr. Uma Shankar, Dr. Sudha Seshayyan, Dr. Rajashree Vasudevan, Ms. Sukanya Viswanathan, Dr. Amit Valmiki, Ms. Himani Chaukar provided great food-for – thought to the audience on diverse themes such as Abhangas, Bhajanas and Folk Music, among others. Prominent vocalists like Shri. Jayteerth Mevundi (Hindustani) and Smt. Chandan Balakalyan (Carnatic) graced the stage later in the evening enthralling the audience and transporting them to a different plane altogether with their majestic virtuosity!

As part of the concurrent session on Day 1, Dr. Anaya Thatte chaired a session that witnessed interactive paper presentations (accompanied, in some cases, with delightful musical performances) by prominent speakers and research scholars on a variety of themes. Smt.Sharanya Sriram stole the show with her fascinating recitals during the concurrent sessions of Day 1.

The concurrent sessions of day 2 generated great buzz as well with various sessions by the likes of Ms. Savita Moghe, Dr. Venkataramani and Ms. Kamala Srinivas. From Kabir to R.D. Burman, from the role of music as a substitute to verbal language in philosophy to the use of music in controlling blood pressure, from Brahmini Pattu of Kerala to Bharud of Maharashtra, the presentations and performances made during these sessions covered the length and breadth of the seminar-theme and touched the hearts of many! One of the highlights was a performance by Ms. Darshana (one of the famous Dayananda Sisters from Chennai) whose performance left the audience so impressed that they insisted for a repeat , which upon popular request, was eventually arranged for by the organizers.

Held simultaneously, the main sessions on day 2 witnessed a highly stimulating discussion on the two main styles of Indian music- Hindustani and Carnatic by Mrs. Radha Namboodiri, Dr. Premeela Gurumurthy and Prof. Yashwant Mahale with some delightful performers in tow to demonstrate their points. Thereafter, Mr. Amarnath Sury, Ms. Arpita Gaidhane and Dr. Sanjeev Dubey went on to broaden the canvas of the discourse to talk about popular music and entertainment as well. The last main session of the day was a truly eye-opening talk delivered by Mr. Karan Sajnani on the scope of music as a tool for therapy.

The day was brought to a close with riveting performances by Shri.Kannakudi Balamurlikrishna and Shri.Sanjeev Chimmalgi. Shri. Balamurlikrishna’s full-throated rendering of Raga Varali, followed by the fourth pancharatna of Saint Tyagaraja was received warmly by the audience, while Shri. Chimmalgi left the audience gasping for more with his bhajan performance that displayed his creative skill, inimitable energy and artistic finesse in full form!

The mesmerizing performances were followed by the valedictory address by the Guest Speaker Kaushal Inamdar, noted singer and music composer, who aptly summed up the proceedings of the seminar while recounting memorable experiences about creating the score for the biopic of Bal Gandharva and also paying a rich and heartfelt tribute to the power of music in general. The seminar was formally closed with a vote of thanks by Dr. Uma Shankar followed by a short prayer recital (*Pasayadan)* by the students and staff of SIES College. Dr. Shankar offered special thanks to the sponsors of the event and the student volunteers from SIES, among others, who worked so hard in making the event happen! She also mentioned that the presentations made at the seminar will soon be published as part of the seminar proceedings.

All in all, the seminar was an aesthetic, intellectual and gastronomic (owing to the sumptuous breakfast and lunch served on both days) feast for scholars, philosophers, musicians and music-lovers alike!