

CELEBRATING *milestones*



P R E S E N T S

Parivar Patrika

--A Quarterly Newsletter

03/24
IV-Edition

FOUNDER'S FOCUS

- A Note from RK & Siva

Namaste Fusionaticans and Rasikas!

While we were pondering over this write up for this edition of the Parivar Patrika, we found our thoughts and ideas circling around a few themes. One loud theme was around 'Durga Shakthi', the latest release of Fusionatica Original: the behind-the-scenes stories and experiences, the love and appreciation it has received from stalwarts in the field, the fervent aspiration for this song to realise its true potential and reaching many many more rasikas... and so on.

The other loud theme was about the growth of the Parivar itself, the pace of it, the need for it, and the possible avenues and roadblocks, aspirations and anxieties, the struggle between ambition and contentment.

And this got us thinking: what's the connection between these themes?

Durga Shakthi is 'Energy'. Energy cannot, and should not, be trapped. It needs to be released, it needs to flow and move and gain momentum and burn bright and grow some more, only to be released and built again. Dynamism and growth – these are not options – they form the very definition of the nature of energy.

Similarly, for Fusionatica, growth is the life force. When we don't grow, we don't just retain status quo, we actually regress, deteriorate and decline before we eventually perish altogether.



RK & Siva

So, growth is an imperative. And it has to be conscious, continual growth and expansion in as many ways as we have the potential for.

All of us have been witness to the growth in the quality of performances by each member of the Parivar. May we keep learning and growing in our individual talents – kudos to each one of the performers! Your individual growth leads to our collective growth, which in turn spurs each one of us on; it's a virtuous cycle.

We each have to keep growing. We each have to individually seek out and open ourselves up to giving and receiving constructive feedback that can fuel our movement to the next level of proficiency!

We have also been witnessing the new themes and formats we are exploring through the various events including the NavaSandhya events. We have to experiment more, while also simultaneously holding high the standards of quality.

These are growth stories that we have witnessed. At the collective level, there are many more doors that need to be opened up. We need to add more members to our Parivar. We need to do more live stage events. And we need multiple heads and multiple voices, and multiple hands to build and nurture the Parivar. It's a spiral of growth – we need to nourish the platform that provides us nourishment.

Please write in with your suggestions and commitments.

Let us grow together, musically!

RK & Siva



CELEBRATING TOGETHERNESS

- A Musical Bond

What is given to us, how do we process it, what we take, what we let go and what do we give back - this is our life's whole journey - lifetime to lifetime or years to years or days to days or moments to moments. In each of the above steps, it is not just the knowledge, but our attitude of receiving, processing, cleaning and giving back that determines how we evolve as individuals and as a community.

I came to know about Fusionatica Parivar through Kanakavalli ji's Bhajan Namavali group which I joined based on a friend's recommendation. We can always keep going up the gratitude chain till we exhaust all known options and realize that for even a small thing to happen, so many forces from the universe come together - very few known and very many unknown.

The reason gratitude plays such an important role in healing is primarily because of this - there are very many unknown forces that act on us for our highest good. In that sense, we, the individuals, are already collective entities.

As we were all battling with our own fears and insecurities with courage and strength, during COVID, many organizations and *Sabhas* switched to online mode of music and dance concerts and very few engaged with the intention of bringing people together. Many announced competitions and I came across Fusionatica Parivar's invitation for an audition and the first thing that struck me was that it was not a competition.

I was looking for something like this for my daughters Srijita and Srijanya and it was perfect. At that time, I had no idea that I would bond with Ram and Siva and Fusionatica Parivar, the way that I experience today.

Watching concerts during the first October 2020 Navasandhya event felt so divine. Ram's enthusiasm and passion to engage, felt very connected. I felt that for Srijita and Srijanya this would be a perfect platform where they can be themselves. Whenever any platform has given something to Srijita and Srijanya, I have approached them to volunteer. That is how my association with the *Prajna* Program or Project Cornerstone started and continues till date.

Hence I approached Ram to ask if there was a way I could volunteer and that's how my journey of engagement with Fusionatica Parivar started. In fact, Ram at the time mentioned, he was overwhelmed with the response of the first Navasandhya and had not planned anything further at that point in time.

Soon the getting to know conversations started and then I started knowing Siva and other members and was a witness to the evolution of Fusionatica community and then to Fusionatica Parivar. What I observed during my interactions with Ram was that he was always open to find what someone was good at and to see how that can be showcased or shared for the benefit of the community.

That is how the yoga workshop started. I must say that it was the first time I did yoga teaching outside of family and friends. It was great joy for me to practice Yoga together with such committed registered members.

It was in one of the conversations that I must have mentioned to Ram about Srijita's passion for art and he suggested that she join Zentangle workshops. I was a little doubtful about Srijita getting up early and doing this but she agreed. I am sure one of the main factors then for her was the appreciation she received from Fusionatica Parivar for her performances. I would say, it was a divine intervention. All members were so encouraging and loving and I don't know if she realized what she received but I know very precisely and I will always be thankful for that. In a world, where there are so many judgements that happen based on various factors, age being one of them, to have this kind of love, is something that I can never forget.

It was in another similar conversation when I mentioned about *Tiruappavai* and we ended up having a *Tiruppavai* workshop. This was another workshop which gave me an opportunity to share and again, was such a pleasure to interact with each and every participant.

I have equally loved listening to most of the Navasandhya programs, Sandhyageet programs and FFPA programs (in that order 😊). As the number of programs increased and we got to know each other's singing, I had to choose my area of participation as a contributor and listener so that I remain authentic to myself.

There was also a phase where Fusionatica Parivar introduced sharing recipes and I loved that as well. It was to try and see our community talents and what we can sustain over a period of time. After some period of trial, it was decided that Navasandhya, Sandhyageet and FFPA would be the main area of focus and Fusionatica theme tune was developed. I am sure we all just love it.

I must say that though I have not been part of Sandhyageet, my interest in karaoke music increased greatly when I used to watch Sandhyageet episodes regularly. Personally, I look forward to Navasandhya events mainly because there is lots of learning for me. I document what everyone sings so I can come back and learn when I want to.

Since I am mainly focusing on teaching rather than performing, Fusionatica Parivar is one of the platforms, where I contribute regularly as a performer. It gives me an opportunity to come up with new ideas and collaborate. Thanks to Ram for always wanting to bring that freshness into Fusionatica Parivar programs.

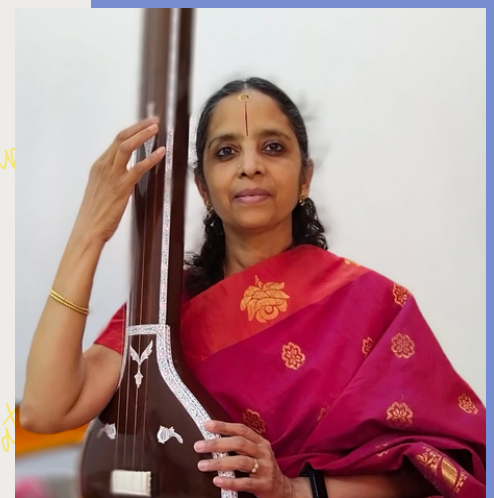
I was just going through Fusionatica Parivar's channel to see when the first Navasandhya aired and I was amazed by the number of videos in this channel in such a short period of time and the nostalgic memories that they have created in me.

Apart from the positive and motivating discussions and conversations, myself and Ram had, there were also very delicate conversations. It was mainly in the areas of frequency of number of programs and asking everyone to join to watch. But I am so glad that, as long as we are authentic and look out for Fusionatica Parivar and not just ourselves, Ram and Siva have space to listen to our honest thoughts. And I'm immensely grateful for that.

Aksharam Abhyāsam Anandam is very thankful to Fusionatica Parivar for giving us this opportunity to enhance our music practice.

I would like to conclude this write up by sharing that the growth of Fusionatica Parivar depends on the Parivar members as much as it depends on the founders. Every one of us has the opportunity to reflect about the space that is created by the Parivar, reflect about what we are receiving and what we are giving, spending a few hours a month on coming up with ideas and sharing.

Wishing Fusionatica Parivar many, many more heart warming milestones!



Shobha
Srinivasan

ROLE OF FEELINGS

-in Celebrating Milestones

In sports, very often we hear phrases like “*Game-point*”, “*Goal*”, “*Catch it*” or “*Howzaattt?*” that can turn around the result of a particular game on its head. Such sounds are basics of a game associated with knee-jerk reactions (positive or negative), depending on our favourite team or individual exposed to it! Taking a cue from here, I would like to emphasize what one can take home from the various acquired and resultant feelings of excitement, failure, celebration or otherwise, when nearing a milestone or achieving it or for that matter, during the process adapted in carrying out an activity!

On the outset, it is proven that when the size of a dream is bigger than the fear of failure the results are always positive and milestones are just indicators that one is on the right path. Savouring the journey of participation is essential for the ultimate ‘Objective of Achievement’, however small or big.

All the more reason, I dare say, inculcating the effect of such feelings proved very handy for us, as parents, in paving the growth path of our children, who pursuantly turned far greater achievers than us in their lives and careers, to our immense delight. I do not think we had to sacrifice much as each and every moment was worth its weight in gold when the results were there to see and cherish forever! Because, when your children become achievers, your steps bear fruits and you are far greater achievers, isn’t it? Milestones then just happen and be counted more for records than anything else

Primarily, it is very important to realize that if one continues to do what one has always been doing, the results will continue to be the same too. Therefore it is very essential to think, size-up each task, frame thought-processes and activities differently *vis-à-vis* our objective. With such an approach, it will be amazing to note that the results automatically change at the fulcrum of such an amalgam that is brought about for a phenomenal outcome every time!

Similarly, pondering over a failure or celebrating a “milestone” is something that one cherishes close to his/her heart as it is akin to receiving a mental nourishment, which is essential for developing and giving fillip to motivating habits that sow seeds of efforts required to achieve these milestones. I am stressing on the word “cherish” as I believe, even a failure can be “cherished” because of the attempt made towards it, in the first place. They are true yardsticks required for self-motivation, especially during the times failures and shortcomings pull back the efforts that are involved to even try out something new, despite any mental or physical shortcomings. One of the essential features of life is to inculcate the feeling at a young age that only sincere participation is in our hands while the result is never going to be.

Even as a teenager, our daughter once got nominated for a prestigious (All-India) award. Three other contestants were huge celebrities already and we knew that our daughter making it to the final was beyond her, as there were far too many factors involved. So, on the eve of the Ceremony, we privately celebrated her milestone saying, the fact that she has been nominated among millions already, is in itself a true success of her accomplishment and another award just among this four wouldn't undermine her achievement in any which way. She brightened up and took the disappointment in her stride very well for her age. Again this feeling helped her motivate herself immensely to aim for several other awards and win them in future, till today, in fact. This has worked on her so much that when a similar predicament was faced by her younger sibling, she helped her cope with the situation and emerge a winner during her later days. I would in fact go to the extent of mentioning that such feelings are no less than milestones themselves!

Oftentimes, once such 'Feelings' are sought-for as 'Motivators', the same feelings take on another role as well. That of 'Guides', 'Regulators' or 'Feel-good' factors without even realizing their immense potential to help us stick to our objectives, in our real-life situations. A fact vouched for by several down-to-earth, successful sports personalities as well.

Hope this article is found useful and handy. I am happy to conclude this piece by wishing budding, young **"FUSIONATICS"** immense success and the best of luck in their future endeavours, whatever field that may be!

Hare Krishna!



C.K. Vasudevan

HEARTSTRINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- A Musical Journey

Hi, I am Rakshitha Ramji, a proud member of the Fustionatica Parivar. My musical journey began when I was in kindergarten, learning under my guru, Mrs. Usha Balabarathy. By Divine Grace, I have had the privilege of singing at prestigious institutions like Malaysia *Thirupugazh Sangam* and Madras Youth Choir, showcasing my talents before eminent personalities like Sri. Kuldeep M. Pai.

Fustionatica provided me the opportunity to perform a 10-minute solo concert for the first time on YouTube for the Navasandhya Navaratri series, which was a great learning experience for me. Currently I am learning advanced Carnatic Music from Mrs. Archana and Aarathi. I have participated in various musical competitions and won prizes including the District Level Best Singer Award from *Iyal Isai Natakamandram* and cash prize in the *Guruguhaamrta - Dikshithar Krithi* competition.

Since December 2022, I have been accompanying my gurus on the *tambura* at their Carnatic vocal concerts. My first and most cherished moment was when I shared the stage with Sri. Dushyanth Sridhar at the *Maragazhi Maha Uthsavam*. Last month, I also had a privilege of accompanying my Gurus for the *Navaratri Uthsavam* at Raj Bhavan, Chennai, where I was felicitated by Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Mr. R.N. Ravi.

Overall, it has been an exciting journey, managing both my academics and music, and I am thankful to Fustionatica for being a stepping stone in my musical career.



Rakshitha
Ramji

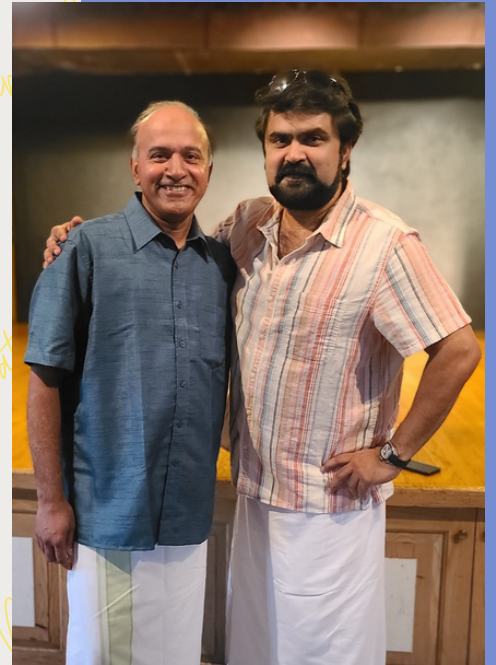
A BLISSFUL THROWBACK

- Recounting 2020

2020! A year, a “phrase”, a term, a movie... So many different interpretations! I will get to the year in a bit, but the phrase refers to the latest brand of cricket, the term refers to the perfect vision... or, what hindsight could be!

As a year, 2020 is one that people across all ages will remember for a long, long time to come. The year when a new word entered the modern lexicon - COVID! A word that brought the whole world to a standstill, smearing people's faces with uncertainty, so much so that nobody knew what to expect from one day to the next! Suddenly, masks were the unisex beauty accessory *du jour*, and overnight, the Swiggys, Zomatos, Ubers and Lyfts of the day became “must-have” apps on people's phones. Given land, air and sea transportation slowed down and almost stopped completely, there was talk that the hole in the ozone layer might have started to heal itself!

Professionally speaking, 2020 was a momentous year for me as well, as I switched jobs to an AI company in March, a few weeks from when any kind of job change would have been ruled out of the question. And personally, it was also the year I became a part of the Fusionatica Parivar. I remember submitting my song for an audition (I think it was “*Mera Jeevan Kora Kaagaz*”) and waiting to hear back with bated breath whether I would be accepted or not. Once I made it through, I found that it was a multi-talented and multilingual family. I also discovered that the Parivar members were extremely well-versed in light/film music, classical and devotional music, and instrumental music, and it was a joy to tune in to the events! From a timing standpoint, most events are aired Saturday morning around 9-9:30AM, which makes it my ideal tea/coffee companion to start the weekend.



Shiva G. &
Anoop Menon

Last but not the least, I genuinely believe that being a part of the Parivar has contributed to improving the quality of my performances so I can stand toe-to-toe with the best of the best in our family!

The timing of this particular version of the Patrika is also perfect for another reason. While the “COVID years” led to people rediscovering their passions, it led to another important event in my life, the results of which were revealed in the first week of February (2024).

I have been fortunate to be involved in the creation of a full-length feature film which was privately screened on Saturday (Feb 3rd) and Sunday (Feb 4th)! It is a Malayalam feature-film titled **Checkmate**, starring Lal, a well-established actor in the Malayalam and Tamil film industries (*Ponniyin Selvan 1 & 2* [Tamil], *Killer Soup* [Hindi], and *2018* [Malayalam] being some of his recent releases), and Anoop Menon, a multi-talented actor, lyricist, screenwriter, and director in the Malayalam industry.

I was part of a small independent film crew that handled everything from acting, pre- and post-production to every kind of logistics imaginable! The movie has been filmed entirely in the US, at several locations here in Connecticut, and in New York, Massachusetts and Vermont. The dialogs are in Malayalam and English, and the film has subtitles in English.

The icing on the cake - given ours is a musical Parivar - is that the legend K.S. Chithra has sung a song in our film, along with playback singers like K.S. Harisankar and Nithya Mammen! With the theme of this 4th edition being “Celebrating Milestones”, I thought the timing was perfect to share my little personal milestone with the family. I am attaching a few pictures of the first-look poster of the film, as well as those of me with Lal and Anoop Menon. I will also send out an update as and when the movie has a full public and global release!



Shiva G. & Lal



NURTURING YOUNG MUSICIANS

- Role of Fusionatica & Rasikas

Music is life.

Everybody loves music. Everybody loves the vibrant enthusiastic group of music lovers, Fusionatica, from the very first encounter. Because, they provide a range of high-quality live and virtual music in all forms, art and wellness programs, as well as engaging lecture demos for new learning. Additionally, they create performance opportunities for aspiring musicians and talented artists across all age groups.

We too love all music in all forms, including fusion music and of course, Fusionatica. I am Ganesh. My wife, Anuradha, and I, along with every member of our family, are enthusiasts of various forms of music and arts. We are fans of the Fusionatica team and their events. Their creative and refreshing approaches, along with their continuous improvement in planning, organizing, and presenting every event and album, earn our growing admiration and appreciation for them.

Their feedback system for each performance is absolutely remarkable. Similar to bees drawn to flowers, both emerging and experienced musicians find themselves irresistibly drawn to Fusionatica, mainly due to the combination of these factors. The same is true with the *Rasikas*, much like ourselves. We have learned a lot from their approach in all these areas.

How about Smart Kids and Young Aspiring Musicians?

Certainly. They too enthusiastically watch and enjoy all Fusionatica events along with their family and friends. This results in increased interest in music in various forms, with a desire to become part of the team.

The Fusionatica team, comprising the founders, panel members, educators, mentors, artists and the *Rasikas*, plays a pivotal role in encouraging the next generation of musicians. This is possible by providing constructive, continuous positive motivating feedback from all members, including all *Rasikas*.

How?

All Fusionatica members and *Rasikas* should see this as a chance to actively get involved, support and contribute to motivating children and young musicians. It's a dedicated service to nurture their talents.

This process helps them to realize...

"I am Hanuman. I can fly high!"

And finally...

- Make sure that all members and all *Rasikas* watch each event, without fail, to increase motivation content for performers.
- All members and all *Rasikas* should take time out to share their valuable feedback and offer words of encouragement to motivate the performers after every event.
- As *Rasikas* & well-wishers of our performers, a lot of whom are young children stepping into the music and performance world, we should do all that it takes to create an atmosphere that fosters creativity and a space for continuous improvement.
- Parents and gurus can offer constructive feedback during rehearsals so that the performers can focus on and enjoy the process, and continue to work hard, despite having other commitments like studies and exams.

Research says kids who learn music are smarter. Our kids and young aspiring musicians are lucky!

They have Fusionatica.

Let us work together to create great musicians.

After all, music is life!



Ganesh V.

Fusion at Originals



MARCH '24 / IV EDITION

DIVINITY OF DURGA SHAKTHI

- My Recording Experience

Hello and Namaskarams, Parivar!

Here's wishing everyone a very happy, productive and blissful New Year 2024, albeit a little late! Hope this year brings with it something wonderful and memorable for each one of us, with the promise of bigger milestones even!

Speaking of milestones, I am blessed to share my journey of this year's mega project under Fusionatica Originals: *Durga Shakthi*. This magnum opus is a composition of the Durga *nāmāvalī*, by our very own mastermind, and whom I like to regard as my mentor, RK.

Being the lead singer on the project is indeed a huge milestone for me as an artist, having nurtured my art since the tender age of four.

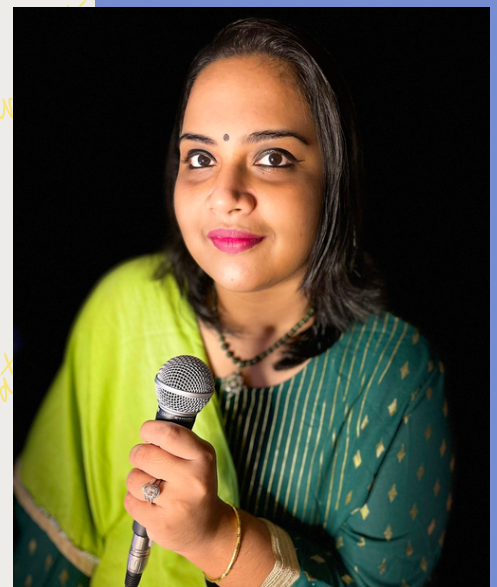
Working with RK:

The journey itself has been nothing short of transcendental. I have learnt so much from RK holistically. His vision is brilliant and the efforts and thought he puts into every project, including this one, is just tremendously inspiring.

Before *Durga Shakthi*, I also had the chance to work with him on the parivar MOGO, which was yet another beautiful experience.

The Recording Process:

I have another name to mention here, which is Saraswati *ji* (our very own violin maestro Srinath's mother).



Bharathi Sai

She was the diction coach on this project and guided me through the entirety of the *namavali*, explaining the meaning & *bhava* as we went along, so that the right emphasis could be given to each word in each line while recording.

Recording the composition was the best part for me. RK shared his vision for the song and embraced my creative touches whilst ensuring that it only enhanced his vision further. It was truly empowering to record my portions and get enriching feedback from him.

Without getting into the technical nitty-gritty, I would just like to finish by saying that the various elements in the song make for such a beautiful flow, and it's all the vision of RK that can be seen through and through.

Speaking of various elements, this write-up would be incomplete without giving a shoutout to our budding star, Prakrithi Suresh, whose powerful backing vocals add a whole new dimension to this *Durga nāmāvalī*. We're truly grateful to be in the presence of such massive talents!

We cannot wait to share this Fusionatica Original with our Parivar members and I seek everyone's blessings and good wishes to grow more and more as an artist.

Finally, I wish for all of us to keep growing as artists, supporting each other and continuing to share our passion for blissful music.

Warmest regards & lots of love to all,
Bharathi Sai



Bharathi Sai

DURGA SHAKTHI: BTS SCOOP



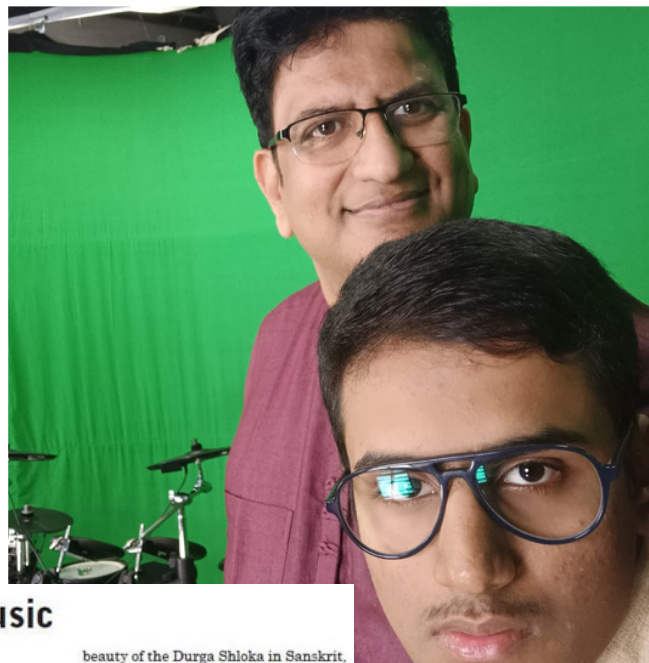
Fusionatica's fusion music

Musical group Fusionatica released a new song on their YouTube channel on Mar 8, on the occasion of Women's Day and Maha Sivaratri. Titled 'Durga Shakthi' the song is based on Durga Dwatrimshat Namavali and has been sung in a confluence of Indian classical, jazz and rock styles.

"Evocative of abundant courage, regenerative creativity and fierce fearlessness, this presentation is both a war cry and a victory march," said the Fusionatica team. Experience the ancient



beauty of the Durga Shloka in Sanskrit, re-imagined with resonant and reverberating poetry of sound, bringing together the energy of Rock and the soulfulness of Indian classical music, brought to life by the powerful and fluid voice of Bharathi Sai (lead singer), Prakrithi Suresh (singer), K.Srinath (violin), Meeran (key-board), Purushoth (rhythms) and composition of R.N.Ramkumar. Composer Ramkumar is a resident of Thiruvanniyur and can be reached at 98402 99384.



FROM THE COMPOSER'S LENS

- An Interview with RK

Yet another feather (original production) added to the Fustionatica Parivar cap. How did the idea of *Durga Shakthi* come about?

R.K.: This idea got stuck in my head about five years ago but I couldn't take it forward at the time as I was looking for a strong and bold voice who will be able to sing both classical and rock. That's how Bharathi Sai fitted straight away. And we wanted Prakrithi Suresh too, who has a lovely and bold voice.

The original is inspired from a *Durga nāmāvalī*. What is a *nāmāvalī* and why did you choose this one in particular for the next Fustionatica Original?

R.K.: Simply put, a *nāmāvalī* is a list of names, of any God really. Derived from Sanskrit, *nāmāvalīs* are chanted as *slokas* or sung as *bhajans*. This particular *Durga nāmāvalī* is more complicated in terms of pronunciation and the tuning needs to change according to the meaning. Luckily Saraswati from Fustionatica Parivar, who is a Sanskrit Pandit and familiar with all these *slokas*, helped me nail these nuances.

The composition sounds like a nice blend of rock and Indian classical music. What inspired you to narrow down on these two themes?

R.K.: I have always been excited about intermingling genres and when you put very different styles together, something new can emerge. It's classical because it is basically a *sloka* and classical is the right fit.



R.N.
Ramkumar

The emotion and the mood is of energy, which is timeless, and it has to break all boundaries and therefore I chose rock.

All these previews have got us pumped for an incredible production. What else can we look forward to from you?

R.K.: *[laughs]* Thank you. Looking forward to another two songs, one's a *Bharathiyar* song and the other is an instrumental fusion.

How do you choose the *ragas* for these originals? Can you elaborate on your thought process behind creating musical masterpieces?

R.K.: I don't go by choosing a *raga* as such. I'll focus on the emotions and the impact that I have in my mind - the *raga* just comes about.

You've worked with Bharathi on the Fusionatica MOGO (musical logo) and now an original composition. How has your experience been recording with her as well as other artists in the past?

R.K.: Bharathi Sai is a gifted singer and she brings about the combination of talent, hard work, perfectionism, creativity, amazing sense of voice modulation and a big team-player. She is a joy to work with. I like to work with artists who are enthusiastic about their art and are willing to go the extra mile.



R.N.
Ramkumar

Game Time

Can you solve this Soduku?

	7				5			
1				3		5		8
			2		9		6	
9	1		5			4	2	
6	8		3				1	
2	5	4		9				3
7		6	8		1		4	
3	4	5			6		7	1
		1		7		2		6

LEVEL: EASY

PREVIOUS QUIZ
ANSWERS:

1. FLUTE
2. SRI PARTHASARATHY
SWAMI SABHA
3. KING SHAHAJI
4. SHANMUKHANANDA
HALL
5. SAPNA AWASTHI
6. KRISHNA CHANDRA
DEY
7. TROMBONE
8. 36

Looking for answers?
Wait for the next edition!

MARCH '24 / IV EDITION

Parivar Parti kateam



R N RAMKUMAR
Founder



SIVAKAMI S
Co-Founder



SHARADHA JAYARAMAN
Editor



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