

Sarod Player Sridhar Enthralls with Passionate Notes

By BHARTTI KUMAR
Special to India-West

LOS ANGELES — An enthralling evening of Indian classical music featuring sarod player K. Sridhar was presented at the Skirball Cultural Center here Oct. 4. Sridhar, one of the finest exponents of the sarod today, played the classical stringed instrument with great passion and the deep expressive notes captivated the audience.

In a conversation with India-West, Sridhar offered insights into his deep talent and interest in music, which is not widely known.

"I lived in the caves of the Himalayas for 15 years," he told **India-West**. "I learnt how to spiritualize the raagas and also the tones for healing. I refused film music since my vision of music is mental understanding of the soul and individual consciousness. I give radio programs on music as a healing therapy," adding that he has been doing yoga for 55 years.

"Indian music is based on the Hindu philosophy of the three periods of creation, resolution and dissolution," he explained. "Only Indian music starts with the first note and ends on the same note. Most musicians also are not aware of this fact unless they have understood music in a yogic way."

Sridhar added, "There is an art of listening to music through the nose; it is very difficult, but this type of listening heals the 'naadis' and chakras in the body, and that takes care of stress and emotional tensions. When you listen in yogic way, listen to sound, not the raaga."

The auditorium comprised

nearly 90 percent non-Indians, which was no surprise to Sridhar. "Most of my audience is non-Indians," he told India-West. "I have come here the second time on special demand. I did not do film music. I do not do entertainment. I play to give my audience an experience."

"The music has three parts. One is entertainment, another is therapy and the third is mental transcend attainment. People do enjoy entertainment music, but only because they see discern the technical part of it. Just as you leave your shoes outside a temple, for my concert, you have to leave your ego and intellect outside. In my music, the audience, the musicians and the musical instrument, all lose their identity and discrimination. So, it is an experience they enjoy."

For Sridhar, the concept of music is very simple: "I have an acronym for the word 'music,' M for mental, U for understanding, S for the spirit or soul, I for individual, and C for consciousness."

Sridhar was accompanied by tabla virtuoso Anindo Chatterjee, and the two instrumentalists complemented each other perfectly, with the audience enjoying the rhythms of both the tabla and sarod. Chatterjee, a well known tabla master, started playing tabla at the age of six.

The event was organized by the Skirball Cultural Center and the performance was part of the Daniel Pearl World Music Day, which is an annual global concert.

Yatrika Shah-Rais, the music programmer at the Skirball Center, told **India-West**, "I have heard Sridhar before. He is excellent, and hence invited him to perform again."



Sarod player K. Sridhar with tabla accompaniment by Anindo Chatterjee (left) at the Skirball Cultural Center. (Bhartti Kumar photo)

Show Finalist Is Felicitated

SHILLONG (PTI) — The Meghalaya government Oct. 4 presented a cash award of Rs. 100,000 to the "Indian Idol" finalist Amit Paul at a homecoming reception here.

Presenting the award at the Jawaharlal Nehru Sports Complex, Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Paul Lyngdoh said that Paul would inspire youths of the state to excel not only in music, but other spheres as well.

Paul, who has been chosen by the state government as the ambassador for peace, communal harmony and excellence, enthralled the crowd by singing songs like "Nasha Yeh Pyaar Ka Naasha Hai," "Pehla Nasha," "Bulaah Ki Jaana Me Kaun," "Nagan Iai Kynmaw (Khasi)," Garo and Bengali songs for more than an hour this afternoon.



Indian American Journalist Presents Emmy