



# 'I NEVER PREPARE FOR ANYTHING'

By IYER SANJIVANI

*"Unfortunately, classical music is seen only with a spiritual connotation. It is the path to salvation or God. This must change. It is an aesthetic art form which should be appreciated as art and nothing else," states T.M. Krishna. For the uninitiated, Krishna is a first-rate Carnatic vocalist. He has been performing since the age of 12, and has received numerous awards. Known for his pioneering work in the field of music education, this 28-year-old was in the city for a lecture-demonstration on Carnatic music appreciation at i-flex Solutions, and a concert*

reasons. Late Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer had come to one of my concerts and later invited me to be his disciple. That was a very memorable event. In Chennai, melody queen M.S. Subbulakshmi holds private solo recitals at her residence, where an artiste has to perform for her. I sang there for an hour and a half. That was a totally different experience for me. And of course, my recent Paris concert was just marvellous. There were only Europeans in the audience who knew nothing about Carnatic music. But they not only listened to the complex raagam, thanam and pallavi with neraval and manodharma swara, but also appreciated it.

**1** Is it important to hold lecture-demonstrations on classical music?

The Youth Association of Classical Music, Chennai, had revived public interest in Carnatic music. So we had a lot of young singers and instrumentalists coming to the fore. But we also needed listeners, which meant that the masses had to be taught how to appreciate Carnatic music. So we, at YACM, started addressing school children and college students, exposing them to this beautiful art form. It was all part of the *Build A Rasika* (connoisseur) project.

**2** Why do you hold these sessions for corporates?

When I went to the US for a concert, I saw a lot of people in the age group of 25 to 35 years, with a high level of interest in music. Most of them had learnt or had been exposed to music in their younger days, but were now out of touch. To re-initiate this group into the world of music, I started holding appreciation workshops for corporates.

**3** Your most memorable performance?

There are several concerts that I remember for different

**4** How different are audience reaction in India and abroad?

Every artiste creates a brand equity for himself. The audience gets used to it and comes to a certain concert with some expectations. So, whether an artiste performs in Chennai or Mumbai or even abroad, the reaction of the audience is more or less the same. However, listeners in Karnataka do ask for Kannada songs and those in Kerala prefer compositions of Kerala king Swati Thirunal.

**5** How do you prepare for a concert?

Huh! I never prepare for anything. I am a very unsystematic person by nature. I don't plan. I just like it that way. Even the accompanists don't know what I am going to sing at a certain concert. They just respond to me on stage. This keeps me and my music fresh.

**6** If not a musician Krishna would have been...

I studied economics till graduation and am still interested in the subject. I would probably have gone ahead with economics towards management.