

VVS Murari

Violinist | Violist | Educator | Art Entrepreneur

A Legacy of Music

Vadakkencheri Srikrishna Murari, popularly known as VVS Murari, is an ace violinist, violist and a shining representative of the fourth generation of music practitioners in his illustrious family. Born into a lineage of distinguished musicians, Murari's musical journey was shaped by a rich heritage of tradition and excellence. Under the tutelage of his father and guru, the legendary violinist 'Nadayogi' VV Subrahmanyam, and later mentored by the doyen of Carnatic music, 'Padma Vibhushan' Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Murari's artistry was nurtured by the finest. His paternal grandfather, Vadakkencheri Veeraraghava Iyer, and mother, Janaki VVS, who hails from a family of great connoisseurs of music and arts in Kozhikode, also played a significant role in cultivating his musical talents.



A Promising Beginning

Murari's prodigious talent was evident from a young age. He made his debut as a soloist at the tender age of 10 on December 15th, 1986, at the prestigious venue, The Music Academy, Madras, accompanied by the renowned mridangam maestro, Padma Vibhushan Umayalpuram K Sivaraman. This auspicious beginning marked the start of a remarkable career, with Murari going on to enthrall audiences with his mastery over the violin and viola.

A Maestro's Craft

With an unwavering commitment to perfection, traditionalism, and discipline, Murari's artistry is a testament to his dedication to the immortal art form of South Indian classical music (Carnatic music). His lucid raga essaying is a hallmark of his uniqueness, softly penetrating the souls of listeners and transporting them to a realm of sublime beauty. As an ideal accompanist, Murari is the epitome of humility and support, elevating the main artist's performance with his masterful playing. Over nearly four decades of professional performances, Murari has refined his craft, mesmerizing audiences with his versatility and artistry.

A Career of Distinction

Throughout his illustrious career, Murari has had the privilege of sharing the stage with a constellation of veteran musicians & percussionists, including 'Sangita Kalanidhi' DK Pattammal, 'Padma Vibhushan' Dr. M Balamuralikrishna, 'Padma Vibhushan' KJ Yesudas, 'Padma Bhushan' TV GopalaKrishnan, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' TK Govinda Rao, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' N Ramani, 'Padma Bhushan' PS Narayanaswamy, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' TV Sankaranarayanan, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' TN Seshagopalan, 'Padma Bhushan' Trichur V Ramachandran, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' Neyveli Santhanagopalan, OS Thyagarajan, 'Padmashri' Aruna Sairam, 'Padmashri' Bombay Jayashri, 'Padma Bhushan' Sudha Raghunathan, 'Padma Vibhushan' Umayalpuram K Sivaraman, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' Palghat R. Raghunath, 'Padmashri' TK Murthy, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' Trichy Sankaran, Late Tanjore Upendran, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' Vellore Ramabadrhan, Guruvayur Dorai, 'Padma Vibhushan' TV Gopalakrishnan, Guru Karaikudi Mani, Srimushnam Rajarao, 'Sangita Kalanidhi' Tiruvarur Bhathavathsalam, 'Padma Bhushan' Vikku Vinayakram, Late G Harishankar, Late Palghat Sundaram, Late TV Vasam in numerous occasions.

His performances have been marked by critical acclaim, and his mastery over the violin and viola in the Carnatic tradition has earned him a reputation as a versatile and accomplished musician.

A Legacy of Innovation

As a creator, VVS Murari has explored various artistic avenues, including dance dramas, ballets, music productions, composing, and fusion music. His innovative approach is evident in his unique album, "East Of Salzburg," which blends Carnatic Classical and Western Classical Music. Released in 1999 by HMV group, this album showcases Murari's versatility and creativity. Along with his group, NEOVIBES, he has performed live fusion concerts in India, pushing the boundaries of traditional music.

Murari's creative endeavors extend beyond music albums. He has collaborated with MAGIC FACTORY, a music production company, on projects for ad films, short television serials, and short films. Notably, he composed music for the 40th-year celebration of Australian based famous dance institution - Bharatam Dance Company's "Mariamman" in 2013.

One of Murari's most significant contributions is the creation of the 'Carnatic Philharmonic Orchestra'—a groundbreaking concept that brings Western Classical and South Indian Classical music together on a single stage, focusing on blending the two art forms without compromising the individuality and integrity of either tradition. Premiered at the Cleveland Thyagaraja Festival in 2015, this production featured over 75 young artists from North America and later on at Phoenix, Arizona in 2017 featuring close to 100 participants. Murari has also pioneered the concept of 'Panchamukhi,' a unique presentation that showcases five distinct facets of Indian classical music, dance, and Western classical traditions. A standout feature of this concept is the innovative integration of a six-part a cappella arrangement into the classical Carnatic music framework—an unprecedented blend that expands the expressive possibilities of the genre. This production has been performed at various festivals, including the Can-Am music festival in Toronto, Canada, and Cleveland, OH.

Nurturing the Next Generation

As a guru, VVS Murari empowers his students to tap into their imagination, intellect, and creativity, guiding them on a musical journey that fosters a deep bond of mutual trust and respect. By doing so, he not only nurtures his own students, some of whom have become accomplished performers, but also inspires a wider community of young musicians and artists. With students across the globe, including USA, UK, Canada, and India, Murari's influence extends far beyond his own performances, shaping the next generation of musicians and music lovers.

Philanthropy and Community Services

VVS Murari is a strong believer in philanthropy, and his efforts have made a significant impact on the lives of many musicians and artists. Through various charity projects, he has supported musicians affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and provided opportunities for them to showcase their talents. His philanthropic efforts have made a significant impact on the lives of many musicians and artists, providing them with opportunities to excel in their careers and promoting the rich cultural heritage of India.

DAKSHINOTSAVAM: A PROJECT OF HOPE

Launched in December 2020, Dakshinotsavam aimed to identify and feature lesser-known Carnatic musicians from southern India who were impacted by the pandemic. Murari personally contributed generously and collected a significant amount of money, distributing it to 150 musicians from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka. This project not only provided financial support but also brought hope and recognition to these talented musicians.

CHALAKUDY MAHOTSAVAM: CELEBRATING TRADITIONAL ART FORMS

Since 2022, Murari has been curating Chalakudy Mahotsavam, a special open-air festival featuring traditional art forms of Kerala. This event has involved over 250 artists from Kerala, helping them cope with the continued economic crisis in the lesser-known art industry. The festival has been a huge success, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Kerala and providing a platform for artists to showcase their talents.

SUPPORTING MUSICIANS AND ARTISTS

Through various music and art festivals, Murari has been supporting a large number of musicians every year, providing them with opportunities to showcase their talents and bringing them to the forefront. His efforts have made a significant impact on the lives of over 600 musicians, providing them with a platform to excel in their careers.

MANGALA ISAI VIZHA: SUPPORTING NADASWARAM AND THAVIL COMMUNITY

Murari's special curation, Mangala Isai Vizha, has been well-received by the Nadaswaram and Thavil community. This event, held during the UNESCO-recognized December Music festival, has provided a platform for these musicians to showcase their talents and has helped to promote their art form.

VVS FOUNDATION AND SAMAA ARTS: PROMOTING INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC AND ARTS

As the founder of VVS Foundation and SaMaa Arts, Murari has been working tirelessly to promote Indian classical music and arts across the globe.

PROMOTING YOUNG TALENT

Murari has been actively promoting young and talented artists from around the world through SaMaa Arts and the VVS Foundation, providing them platforms to participate in concerts and musical productions. He identifies promising global talents and offers them exposure in India and North America, encouraging them to pursue music as a serious profession. In addition to nurturing emerging artists, Murari also collaborates with seasoned, full-time musicians—particularly those specializing in traditional instruments like the kanjira and ghatam—bringing them on concert tours across North America through SaMaa Arts.

Global Carnatic Musicians Association: Protecting the Interests of Carnatic Artists

Murari also serves as the founding member and State Secretary of Kerala for the Global Carnatic Musicians Association, India. This organization aims to protect the interests of Carnatic artists, irrespective of age, caste, creed, sex, nationality, etc., and provide them with avenues and opportunities for leveraging benefits, both monetary and psychological. GCMA also facilitates insurance benefits and coverage for 150 musicians every year.

Milestones as a Cultural Ambassador

VVS Murari has had a remarkable career as a cultural ambassador, with numerous notable performances and achievements. Here are some of his key milestones:

- *International Performances:*

- Concert Tours and Masterclasses: Multiple concert tours, lecture demonstrations, workshops, and masterclasses in premier institutions in the United States and Canada every year **since 2009**.

- **Switzerland:** Performed in **2024**.

- **United Arab Emirates:** Performed for a special concert with Sandeep Narayan in **2023**.

- **UK:** Performed at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, London, and other locations in **2017**.

- **Ireland:** Performed at Dublin in **2017**.

- **France:** Performed at Theater De la Ville, Paris, with Bombay Jayashri in **2006**, and participated in the Oriental Music Festival.

- **International Music Festivals:** Performed in France, Spain, and Portugal with Bombay Jayashri in **2006**.

- *Notable Collaborations:*

- **Sadler's Wells, London:** Accompanied Bombay Jayashri and Leela Samson for Sama Arts Network Ltd in **2005**.

- **Maestro Illayaraja's Symphony:** Lead solo violinist at the Angelica International Music Festival in Modena, Italy in **2004**.

- Lecture Demonstrations:

- **World Vocal Music Festival, Finland:** Presented on "Adaptation of Violin in South Indian Classical Music" in **2004**.
- **Represented India:** At the World Vocal Music Festival in Tampere, Finland in **2003**.
- **France:** Presented a Master class and demonstration for a Violin Conservatory at Tours in **2003**.

- Early Performances:

- **Australia:** Performed at the Canberra National Museum Theatre and Perth Institute of Performing Arts in 2000, and toured with N Ravikiran in **1998**.
- **Malaysia:** Performed at a special concert organized by CHILD in Kuala Lumpur in **1993**.
- **Singapore:** Performed a Violin duet with his revered father Shri. VVS for Singapore Radio in **1993**
- **World Violin Festival:** Youngest participant at the festival in Koln, West Germany in **1989**, performing a duet concert with his father, Maestro VVS.

As a cultural ambassador, Murari has been sharing India's rich musical heritage with global audiences through his performances and teachings, showcasing his expertise in Carnatic music.

Accolades and Honors

VVS Murari has received numerous accolades for his contributions to Carnatic music. Some of his notable honors include:

- **Sangeetha Kala Sagaram:** Conferred by The Cleveland Thyagaraja Utsavam, Cleveland, Ohio, USA in April 2025
 - **Proclamation by the Office of the Mayor:** Honored by the Office of the Mayor Justin M Bibb, Cleveland, Ohio, USA in April 2024
 - **Sangeetha Vadya Dhurandhara:** Conferred by Carnatica for his excellent artistry and service to Carnatic music worldwide in December 2022
 - **Naadha Saraswathi:** Conferred by Samskrithika Sangha & Brahmana Mahasabha, Chikmagalur, Karnataka for outstanding musicianship, service to the Carnatic Music and fraternity in December 2018
 - **Tantri Vadhya Puraskar:** Conferred by Kalalaya, USA, California for outstanding service to the Carnatic Music and fraternity in March 2016
 - **Sangitha Shironmani:** Conferred by Varasidhi Vinayagar Trust, Toronto, Canada in 2011
 - **Naadha Oli:** Conferred by Naadha Inbam, Chennai in 2004
 - **KV Mahadevan Award of Excellence:** Conferred by Shree Bharatalaya, Chennai in 1999
- Best Violinist Awards:**
- The Music Academy, Chennai: Best Violinist Award from 1996 to 2001
 - Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Chennai: Best Violinist Award in 1995

These honors reflect Murari's dedication to promoting Indian classical music globally as a performer, guru, and evident from his work as the founder of VVS Foundation and SaMaa Arts, and his involvement in various music festivals and events.

Social Media

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