

Published: December 24, 2015 19:56 IST | Updated: December 24, 2015 19:56 IST December 24, 2015

## An exercise in excellence

- [V. BALASUBRAMANIAN](#)



Chitravina N. Ravikiran at The Music Academy. Photo: V. V. Krishnan



Chitravina N. Ravikiran at The Music Academy. Photo: V. V. Krishnan





It is more than three decades since he made his debut at The Music Academy, but even today his performances continue to score with their rich classical content and choice of exceptional ragas, kritis and RTPs. This year was no different as Chitravina Ravikiran exhibited a matchless consistency.

At the Academy, which can be called his home ground, he commenced with a Kedaragowla varnam followed by a brief Nattai exposition. The simple Vinayaka kriti, 'Maha Ganapatim' was interpreted with kalpanaswaras.

The next piece in the vintage and rare Ghanta came as a pleasant surprise. Though its tricky arohana and avarohana do not offer enough space for freewheeling, the virtuoso did well to give discerning rasikas a clear picture of the raga followed by Dikshitar's Navavarana kriti. The expansive and soothing phrases of Kalyani were undoubtedly the high points of the concert.

Akkarai Subbalakshmi (violin), who is known to be in tune with the main artist, came up with lucid replies. Ravikiran played a detailed swaraprastara with several gripping variations in the tala speed for Thyagaraja's 'Nidhi Chaala Sukhama'.

Oothukkadu's Umabharanam kriti elevated the tempo. K.V. Prasad (mridangam), S.V. Ramani (ghatam) and Vyasa Vittala (ganjira) kept pace with Ravikiran, and made significant contributions with arudhis and vibrant nadais. Bhairavi, the main piece of the evening, was replete with rakthi phrases. His profound musical instincts came to the fore with the fretless ebony doing wonders.

The ragamalika tanam that followed comprised Behag, Varali and Nattakurinji in all their vivid hues. The Pallavi was in Adi talam (rettai kalai).

Taking cue from the swara patterns of Ravikiran, Prasad in the thani did well to replicate them. His left and right, well balanced, did touch the core. Ramani (ghatam) gave ample support with effective beats.

Vyasa Vittala (ganjira), senior most disciple of G. Harishankar, did his guru proud by playing some striking tala patterns.

---