



Vinay Nair, a software entrepreneur turned art curator is converging artists from across the world to portray the universal language of art

by Chenchu Sherin Thomas

Why would a cardboard painting drawn with pastels costs US\$120 million? Why it never fails to transfer 'The Scream' of a century to the onlooker? Why is it that Norwegian Edward Munch could easily connect with the world over, with this simple yet inimitable portrayal of human agony? "It is the gift of visual art, which has a universal language," says Vinay Nair, an entrepreneur who has been investing

his time and effort on art and artists to develop a 'convergence' between artists across the world. Vinay, a US resident, was in the city for the background activities of his upcoming art exhibition.

It was an inherent love for art and literature that brought Vinay and his wife Mamta to Kerala to identify and promote talents from across the country. With their software company, Vam systems, established in the US, the couple set out to explore their common love - art. All intended to make 'VAM' a brand name signifying art as well as technology

they have named their second endeavor 'Vam Art Inc'. With an office and studio in progress in the capital city, and an art gallery in Metuchen, New Jersey, Vam is all set to make a difference in the art world.

"We are not serious practitioners or professionals of art, but we can appreciate it. I am from Kerala, my wife is from Mumbai and my children are neither Malayalis nor Sindhis. They are born in Middle-East and are being brought up in US. So they have a divisive identity. This is the case with art as well. Even in music there is a compartmentalization, diverse languages, genres etc. But visual art defies all this. Visual art can speak the same language to every one across the world. We wanted to explore that possibility," says Vinay.

Vinay's Vam art, named after himself, wife, daughter and son, has conducted four exhibitions so far, with participants from all the continents. From his first

exhibition, 'convergence' conducted in 2007 at the capital city, he managed to bring together Japanese and African artists with the country's known names.

"Our main aim is to identify and promote the established artistic quality from across the world without getting influ-



enced by commercial interests. We have worked with emerging and established artists from all continents by now. Our intentions are beyond just exhibitions. We want to conduct art exchange programs and we would like to integrate art and technology by including our software company in the process," says Vinay.

Vinay and his team reach out to potential artists from across the world and invite their works for the exhibition and make them participate in Vam art's activities. Vinay's theme for all exhibitions is 'Convergence' as he wants the future art students to have no bafflements while they trail through Vam art's history.

"Earlier movies and literature defined what the society should be in the coming years. But today it is the other way around. Cinema is giving what the society wants even if it is obscene languages or immorality. I don't want art to suffer such a future," he says.

Vinay who would like to test digital experience management by using software and art also has an online forum in his mind, where artists and art aficionados can meet and have serious discussions about art and literature.

"I don't look at the financial prospects when I choose an artist. If he is established good, if not we will give him a platform to showcase his works. I remember once we had an artist who came to us and said she is ready to draw anything we ask her to. We don't want that. The art in the artists should come from within. It is not a commercial product which we make in numbers," says Vinay.

An exhibition is going on Vinay's art gallery in New Jersey without the participation of any Indian artists. However, in the coming months he is planning to organize one in the capital city by involving artists from the country as well as from across the world.



Bharatanatyam exponent Rama Vaidyanathan speaks about the mystical coincidences that drew her to the classical art form

'Each Dancer Should Develop a Natyasastra'

by Sivalakshmi Roshith

Graceful and spiritual in her words and gestures, Bharatanatyam exponent Rama Vaidyanathan believes destiny drew her to dance. She recently performed in the state in the Soorya Festival. She speaks with City Express about the mystical coincidences that drew her to the classical art form.

"Even before I was born, my mother had decided that I should be a dancer. The reason was that she was very much enchanted by renowned dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy's performance which she happened to watch while she was pregnant with me. On the very same day she decided if the baby she was carrying would be a girl, she would teach her dance, and if possible, tutor her under Yamini Krishnamurthy herself. Lady luck favoured her and when I was six years old, my mother came to know that her dream dancer was going to start a dance school in the same city, Delhi, where we were then residing. In fact, I was the very first student of Yamini Krishnamurthy and also the first one to perform arangettam from her dance school," recalls Rama.

Fifteen years of tutoring under her dear guru is the reason for her 'mad adherence' to dance, she says. "I learnt the whole language of Bharatanatyam and the complete dos and don'ts from her. For any artiste it's important the first lessons have to be really firm and in this way, I am really fortunate. We shared a very special



guru-shishya bond," she says.

If Yamini Krishnamurthy nourished her with the Bharatanatyam vocabulary, the dancer says the performer in her got better moulding from her next guru Saroja Vaidyanathan, who is also her mother-in-law. "In fact, Amma guided me to become a professional dancer. She gave me valued tips regarding the items to be chosen for a performance and how to carve out a unique personal style for myself," says the dancer who adds that it's compulsory every dancer should develop his or her own natyasastra. "A dancer should always submit to genuine improvisations. It's important you observe other eminent performers. But it's high time the concept of copy-paste was ruled out from books.

Just imagine if every dancer decides to imitate others' styles. Then this epic sphere will have countable unique patterns to boast of. Besides, you can never go down to mark an identity," she says. "The soul of a dancer should dance along. It's like the blending of Jeevatma and Paramatmah. Jeevatma should be the dancer and Paramatmah should be the dance. When both of them bond together, there is bliss," says the Delhi-based Malayali dancer.

So what is Rama Vaidyanathan's distinct style? "I am a person who loves improvisations and my choreographed items are always varied. Basically, I don't move out from the core of traditional vogue, though I devise my own technique to suit the taste of 21st century Bharatanatyam," says the artiste whose has received several accolades. For Soorya Festival she performed one of her signature item

Mayoora Alarippu.



"A dancer should always submit to genuine improvisations. It's important you observe other eminent performers"

EVOLVE ROCKED THE STAGE

Evolve 1.0, a bi-monthly gig series formed by three youngsters to promote 'independent' music in Kerala debuted with All the Fat Children last week



by Saliha Nasline

As the state has hosted All The Fat Children, an alternative rock band from Bangalore, it was a dream come true for musicians Ashwin Gopakumar, Ganesh Radhakrishnan and Hari Krishnan. When the event was staged last week at Loungevity, Avenue Regent, it was a realisation of their pet project Evolve 1.0, a bi-monthly gig series to promote 'independent' music, (own compositions), in Kerala.

Evolve aims at turning the Kerala music scenario more lively by providing an opportunity for the musicians and bands from all over the world to perform in Kerala. Ashwin, one of the brains behind the project, points out how talented musicians in the state struggle to get a good stage to perform.

He says, "It is interesting to see a Malayali hand in each and every band in the country right now. The bands, especially those from Kerala, have complained about lack of space in the state. Even the biggest bands in the country, Avial and Motherjane, are from Kerala but it is sad that there are no stages to perform." The gig series was organised by a bunch of musicians who set up

Trivandrum Rock Revolution (TRR), a platform for alternative music that made its beginning by hosting D-I-Y metal gigs in Thiruvananthapuram in 2010.

The trio, Ashwin from the band Purple Blood, Ganesh from The Down Troddence and Hari from Rocksault, are back in action after a hiatus, to branch out to different parts of Kerala and spread the message about 'Independent' music.

"We have been planning to organise gigs in Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode, as we expect the people would respond positively."

"Evolve is also planning to tour the cities with bands by the year-end and put together the first intra-state tour documentary to be directed by Vijay Nair. We will kick-start the band tour in Kochi and then move to Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode," he says.

The gig series commenced with All The Fat Children from Bangalore to mark their debut gig in Kochi. "We have brought out our bi-monthly calendar. The F16's, a Chennai-based band, will perform on October 19 and Frank's Got The Funk (Chennai) on November 9," says Ashwin.

"We started TRR with a small gig at our friend's place while we were in col-

lege in a bedroom-turned jam room. After the first show, we got tremendous response," says Ashwin.

The bedroom gig soon moved to Trivandrum's Purple Lounge, where the dance floor was turned into a mosh pit, accommodating 200 metal heads.

"We always wanted a platform for Kerala acts and wanted other bands from across the country to perform in the state. And thus evolved Evolve," Ashwin quips.

"Evolve is not just a live show, it is an experience in all the sense. We are working our best to make every single show an exclusive model for the artist showcased and looking forward to doing more acts in

Kochi and turn the city into the next hub for 'Independent' Music," says Ashwin.

All The Fat Children formed in 2008 has Eben Johnson on guitars and vocals, Vickram aka Vicky on bass and vocals and Sachin Savio Dane on drums. Their influences include Avial, Motherjane, Junkyard Groove,

Freak Kitchen, Dream Theater, Indus Creed, Iron Maiden, Queensryche, Nickelback, Machine Head, Theory of a Deadman, Opeth, Pink Floyd, Iced Earth and many more.

ENGAGEMENTS

■ **Sree Anantha Radhekrishna Seva Samithi:** 'Bhakthipravachanam' by Brahmasree Gopalavallidasar, Sri Sitarama Bhaktasabha Hall, Ayodhya Nagar, Sreevarahom, 6.30 pm

■ **C H Muhammed Koya Smaraka Samithi:** Ramzan Saurhuda Sangamam; P C Sukumaran Nair hall, Press Club; 10 am.

■ **Suvarna Aesthetics:** Suvarna smiling faces; Fourth Estate hall, Press Club; 11 am.



■ **Organisers:** P T Bhaskara Panicker memorial lecture; Speaker G Karthikeyan to attend; Press Conference hall, Press Club; 5 pm.

FIRST DAY FIRST SHOW

MALAYALAM



- Pattam Pole**
 - Sreekumar
- North 24 Kaatham**
- Ezhamathe Varavu** (3 Shows)
 - Kairali (4 Shows)
- Artist**
 - Sree (4 Shows)
- Sringara Velan**
 - Nila (4 Shows)
- Pattam Pole**
 - Kripa
- D Company**
 - New (4 Shows)
- Dhaivathinte Swantham Cletus**
 - Athira (4 Shows)
- Edukki Gold**
 - Sree Visakh (4 Shows)
- Oh Darling**
 - Sreebala (4 Shows)
- Sarpa Sundhari**
 - Ramya (4 Shows)
- Pullipulikalum Atinkuttiyum**
 - Sree Padmanabha (4 Shows)
- Malayala Nadu**
 - Kripa
- Radio Jockey**
 - Ajantha (4 Shows)
- Dhaivathinte Swantham Cletus**
 - Aswathy (4 Shows)

TAMIL



- Naiyandi**
 - Ajantha (4 Shows)
- Pattathu Yaanai**
 - Sreekumar
- Rajarani**
 - Athulya (4 Shows)
- Naiyandi**
 - Anjali (4 Shows)

HINDI



- Baat Bann Gayi**
 - Athira (4 Shows)
- Besharam**
 - Kalabhavan (4 Shows)
- Rajakumari**
 - Central (4 Shows)
- Zanjeer**
 - Dhanya (4 Shows)

Phone Booking
 ■ Sreekumar, Sree Visakh Ph: 2331222
 ■ New Ph: 2322344 ■ Anjali Ph: 2475579
 ■ Ajantha Ph: 2472825 ■ Kairali Ph: 3013030 ■ Kalabhavan Ph: 2322314
 ■ Sree Ph: 3013030 ■ Ramya Ph: 2476773
 ■ Athira Ph: 2475579 ■ Kripa Ph: 2471655
 ■ Dhanya Ph: 2476773 ■ Aswathy Ph: 2475579
 ■ Sreepadmanabha Ph: 2473999

e-booking
 ■ www.ajantatheatre.net
 ■ www.kripacinema.com