

## Metro Plus Coimbatore

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### Thank you for the music

ANJAN SRIHARI

There was something in the air that night when Drums Sivamani, Stephen Devassy and Ravi Chary cast their spell, writes Anjan Srihari

Photos: K. Ananthan



**ELECTRIFYING** The young audience was in raptures over the performances

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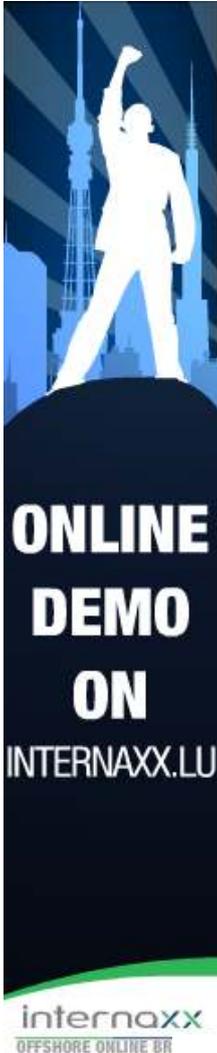
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A nokha 2011, the annual tech fest of the Amrita School of Engineering drew to a close, after a plethora of technical events. There was one event left, the one which everybody looked forward to – Eventide 2011, which was to feature Drums Sivamani, sitar exponent Ravi Chary and keyboard maestro Stephen Devassy.

After the traditional start to the evening, the show at last, began. Sivamani, Stephen and Ravi got ready to cast their spell. From the moment Sivamani's drum sticks touched the drums, it was magic. The energy he generated was electrifying. Just watching the bandana clad drummer perform stunts with his sticks inspired awe. Sivamani's flashing smile further lit up the evening.



I knew little about Ravi Chary, before Eventide. I regretted not having listened to him earlier. He began softly, strumming his sitar keeping time with the drums, and then, the crescendo built up into a mind-blowing, full-fledged solo. Throughout, Ravi Chary's composure never deserted him. He came in like a fresh alpine breeze and went out like a hurricane.

It did not take Stephen Devassy long to show us why he is considered on par with The Mozart of Madras, when it comes to playing the keyboard. Clad in white shirt and blue jeans and with his hand plucking up musical notes out of thin air, he straight away connected with the audience, especially the girls! Screams of 'Stephen' echoed in the hall after every performance of his. He even had girls swooning over him!



In the jugalbandhi performed by the three artistes, Ravi Chary's sitar wove its way around Stephen's notes and Sivamani's beats complemented them

perfectly. It was nothing short of divine. Many in the audience were moved to tears.

It was with a sense of wonder we watched and heard jerry cans and suitcases producing music in Sivamani's hands. He looked like he was having the time of his life and so were we all. The belting out of ever so popular Rahman numbers such as Humma Humma and Muqala Muqabla drew loud cheers from the audience with both the young and the old joining in.



The icing on the cake was 'Jai Ho'. Loud 'Jai Ho' of 3800 odd people rent the air. "We quite forgot that we were teachers and joined in with the students in dancing and singing," remarked Karthika Nair, a staff member. In all the excitement and chaos of a huge concert, Sivamani found the time to interact with those, who waited outside the auditorium, as they had no tickets for the show.

The concert finally drew to a close at around 10 p.m. No one was really ready to leave. It was too short a time to fully savour the music. As I got into the vehicle to return home, I couldn't resist taking one last look into the hall. I smiled, thinking of the torrent of swaras that had taken it by storm. It was truly a symphony in paradise.

The Hindu was the media partners for the event.

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