

Tuesday, March 06, 2012 2:23 AM IST

‘LIKE MEDICINE, MUSIC TOO NEEDS TRAINED PROFESSIONALS’

The music of Mozart and the music of Beethoven belong to a child growing up in Kodambakkam or Chengalpet as much as they belong to a kid in Vienna or New York,” says George Mathew, Singapore-born Indian conductor. “We are at a place where great treasures of world music belong to us and we have the possibility in engaging children, in order to enlighten, enrich, transform and condition them.”

The founder and artistic director of Music for Life International, who was recently in the city to participate as a speaker at TEDxKCG, adds, education in the field of music is as vital as that in any other area. “Nobody assumes that as long as you can pick up the basics and have the passion, you can become a good cardiologist or a pilot,” he validates. “One can probably jump in and do something – but we’re talking about extracting the potential inside music, you can’t do that if you don’t have a working knowledge.”

In his talk at TEDxKCG, he explained how music can be used as a behavioral model for institutions, corporations, educational organisations and governments. This concept is clearly something close to his heart. “Five years ago, when we did our first humanitarian concert, there were ways in which music seemed to suggest a mission,” he begins. “It is not philanthropy so much as that music is deeply con-



George Mathew

AN ENDEAVOUR FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

As an initiative of Music for Life International, an organisation George created to promote transformative action through music, Ubuntu Shruti was formed as a training orchestra for young musicians, who all have a graduate degree in music performance. They are those who haven’t necessarily started their professional music careers. As George puts it, they are “people who are on their edge.” With different methods of training, students are prepared to enter the professional music circle. “We encourage them to take ownership and in the process, we create a situation that is more like chamber music where there is no conductor,” explains George. “The idea is that they are an empowered group of musicians.”

The orchestra also has a social mission where programmes that focus on particular social issues relating to conflict and peace, discrimination, immigration, among other issues are addressed through concerts.

nected to everything we do. The actual process by which music is made and the way in which people interact with each other are a model in which we can behave in other parts of our lives,” he explains.

For him, he says that music, rather than being an avenue to raise funds, is emerging as an engine of action. “Music itself generates possibility for change,” he puts it concisely.

— Prashanti Ganesh

GRT Hotel: GST Road, St Thomas Mount, ■ 22310101; Kebabs & Kurries, The Accord Metropolitan: GN Chetty Road, ■ 28161000; The Dhaba: 100feet, Taramani Road, Velachery, ■ 22432214; Peshawari: Cathedral Road, Gopalapuram, ■ p28110101; The Khyber Grill: TTK Road, Teynampet, ■ 24994101; Kabul: TTK Road, Teynampet, ■ 24996761; Sigree Hotel: Aruna Complex, Sterling Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 42664222; Muglai Tandoor, Aruna Hotel Annex: Sterling Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 28262626; Shan-e-Punjab: No.5, Vepery Church Road, Hotel OPark View Inn, Vepery, ■ 42661888.

■ STEAKS AND SIZZLERS

Tangerine, Murray's: Gate Road, Teynampet, ■ 42110888; Italian, Little Italy: NH Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 42601234; Eatalica: Sterling Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 42381009; Casa Picola: Kaohar Nawaz Khan Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 28330808.

■ CHINESE

Chin Chin, The Residency: GN Chetty Road, TNagar, ■ 28364849; The Oriental Blossom: JN Salai, Arumbakkam, ■ 24757788; Dynasty, Harrison's Hotel: Valluvar Kottam High Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 42222778; China Man Hotel, Nest Inn: Gandhi Irwin Road, Egmore, ■ 28192919; Singapore Rex: Chetpet, ■ 42849996; Shanghai Club, Chola Sheraton: Cathedral Road, Gopalapuram, ■ 28110101; China Town: Cathedral Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 28112246; Mainland China Hotel: Aruna Complex, Sterling Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 28338345; Rangli's: MG Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 42144933; Noodle King: No.2 Gee Gee Plaza, 1/7 Wheat Crafts Road Nungambakkam, Chennai IV 34, ■ 28276383 / 28251361; Lemon Grass, The Rain Tree Hotel: Alwarpet, ■ 42252525; Wang's Kitchen: 7 Star Building Anna Nagar, ■ 26264633; The Noodle House: Valluvar Kottam High Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 43596043; Heaven And Earth: Anna Salai, ■ 28550376.

■ WESTERN CONTINENTAL

The Crown, The Residency Towers: T Nagar, ■ 28156363; Eden: Valluvar Kottam High Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 42222777; Sparky's Diner: Egmore, ■ 42144206.

■ OTHER SPECIALITY

Health Food, Alwo: NH Road, Nungambakkam, ■ 66514241; Sea Food Kayal, Le Royal Meridian: GST Road, St Thomas Mt., ■ 22314343; Sea Crest: ECR, Kanchipuram District, ■ 27472435; The Fisherman's Fare: Spur Tank Road, Chetpet, ■ 28362071; Bay View Point, Taj Fishermen's Cove: Covelong Beach, Kanchipuram District, ■ 67413333; Mexican Don Pepe: Cathedral Road, Gopalapuram, ■ 28110413; (75 + for 2 persons)