

## Musical Montage 2011 in Coimbatore

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Feeling the love



Old love stories came alive as the Madras Musical Association sang Country, Jazz, Pop and Broadway.

Only for love MMA is made up of singers of all ages and occupation The question to be asked is, if the Madras Musical Association (MMA) has been around since 1893, why has it taken it so long to make an appearance in our city? A member of the audience did point out that he had seen the choir perform once in Coimbatore, sometime in

the 70s, and it had performed in the Central Jail auditorium, after which the members partied at the Coimbatore Club.

Now, they were back again treating Coimbatoreans to a Saturday evening of music at the Gee Dee Auditorium. Called Musical Montage, it was organised by the Coimbatore Art & Theatrical Society (CATS). Old friends

Most of the songs were old favourites, and all of them wonderfully sung. As conductor Augustin Paul went up on his toes and brought his baton down, the MMA choir launched into "The hills are alive with the sound of music"... followed by, "Raindrops and roses", "Doe a deer" and "Climb every mountain".

Then, we felt the love with Lion King and the Phantom of the Opera, and troubles melted like lemon drops with the Wizard of Oz Story. It was Sound of Music all over again with "You are sixteen, going on seventeen," followed by "Alleluia" .

A medley from My Fair Lady had Ebenezer Arunkumar, of the fantastic voice, singing "Show me" along with a feisty Tanvi Shah, who continued her Eliza Doolittle act with "Won't it be lovely?" and "I could have danced all night".

South Pacific was next with a lusty all-boys chorus "Nothing like a Dame". Sangita Santosham's "World of my own" from Little Mermaid was quite wonderful, too.

MMA's middle name could well be modesty, as many celebrities make up its choir. With over 65 members that evening, the choir had several famous playback singers.

## Celebrities

Amongst them, were Emmy Award winner Tanvi Shah, ( the "Jai Ho"girl from Slumdog Millionaire), Megha Harini, who has sung playback for Singam among other films, and Kalyani Nair who has also sung for films, but, who confesses her passion is arranging music like 'Augustin Sir'. From school kids to retired elders, the choir sang as one, and had a jolly good time doing so. There was even a father and daughter duo, Sangita Santosham and her dad, Ravi Santosham, who has been MMA's president for 20 years now. The choir usually sings Western classical, but decided to present a montage of jazz, country, pop and Broadway. Ravi Santosham sang a memorable "Country Roads" and the audience sang along admirably.

They did the same with Beatles and Michael Jackson. A hearty response greeted Kalyani Nair's "KillingMe Softly" and Megha Harini's "Thank you for the music" by ABBA . Ebenezer and Tanvi sang "Time to say goodbye", but, the audience wanted one more.

And, the evening concluded with an enthusiastic "Best band in the land". The organisers of Musical Montage 2011, Coimbatore Art & Theatrical Society (CATS) came into being in 1984. Since then, has brought a variety of theatre and entertainment to Coimbatore. CATS believes that art and culture are therapeutic, and it aims to promote more such cultural events for the residents of the city. CATS is also engaged in other projects. One such is City Buzz, Coimbatore's very own complimentary tourist brochure available at the arrival hall of the airport.