

A Legend in the making: Siddharth Nagarajan

Limca-record winner and youngest drummer to play for Kollywood entralls ANOKHA participants

Athira Rajkamal

Siddharth Nagarajan is no ordinary 13-year-old. National Geographic Channel identified him as a drumming prodigy, one of the seven geniuses of the world in their popular show 'My Brilliant Brain' (DEC'07) in the INBORN category.

Siddharth started playing drums when he was a toddler. "My parents told me that they found me drumming dandiya beats on the dhol one morning," he says.

His father, Nagarajan, popularly known as Nagi who is a professional rhythm programmer, quickly recognized the inborn talent in the boy and made a mini drum kit for him. He has been drumming ever since, his incredible skills making him a professional at a tender age.

The prodigy had started giving public performances from when he was



The young drummer caught an action.

three and holds the Limca Book of Records as the youngest drummer of India for three consecutive years (2003-2005). He is perhaps also the youngest musician to record for a film (Nenjil jil jil - Tamil).

Despite his immense talent, the

young percussionist is no different from those of his own age. He loves hanging out with his friends and play football and just about manage to combine his studies with his passion for music.

An 8th standard student of Jubilee

Hills Public School, Hyderabad, says his teachers and the school management are very supportive of his passion for music. "They understand my problems," he said in an apparent reference to his regular absence from the class due to professional commitments.

Music runs in his family. His grandfather G Narayan is a renowned tabla player. Siddharth himself had his first lessons in drumming from the famous percussionist Sivamani.

One memory he cherishes is his performance at Rashtrapathi Bhavan for President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's birthday. He was just seven then.

"I remember it was great fun. I remember the president giving me an extra laddu", Siddharth chuckled. Not just the laddu, the president was equally generous in his praise for the youngster. "These tender hands have given me so much pleasure in the

last ten minutes," he said.

Siddharth plays percussion instruments from across the globe, be it Latin, African or Cuban, besides Indian. He also plays guitar and the keyboard, which he uses for his compositions.

Like all starry-eyed youngsters, Siddharth also has his icons. He says his idols are internationally acclaimed drummers Michael Stephen Portnoy and Steve Smith. "I am mad about them. Mike is my Godfather in music. I am a great, great, great, great fan of his. My room is full of his posters."

Siddharth's hands are full. Apart from his stint at devotional albums, he is currently planning on an album on the five elements of nature. As he continues his musical journey, he continues to enthral his audiences both in India and abroad.

Experts pool in ideas at TEDx

Komal G

Krishnaveni K.P

TEDx (Technology Entertainment and Design), Amrita University, witnessed a convergence of ideas, experience, knowledge and creativity coming from a plethora of backgrounds to propound world-changing ideas to inspire the youth. Organised in association with CII Young Indians Chapter of Amrita School of Business. TEDx is a non-profit organisation that makes use of a combination of live presenters and TEDtalk videos to stimulate ideas.

The event brought together many

achievers like the jovial Mr Arvind Gangaram Talekar, member of Mumbai Dabbawalas, 13-year old drumming prodigy Siddharth Nagarajan, G D Rajkumar, a young and dynamic industrialist from Coimbatore, and others under a single roof.

Mr. Aravind raised peals of laughter when he said the humble Dabbawala was even the subject of PhD researchers and how they kept Prince Charles waiting for an appointment. "I feel the Mumbai Dabbawalas are even better than the MBA in their managerial skills", said Brahmachari Abhyamrita Chaitanya, Pro-Chancellor, Amrita University. "Sometimes

the most complex problems are solved by the simplest solutions", said Mr. Krishnadas, another speaker at the event who is also an ex student of Amrita University, currently pursuing his Ph.D. in IIM, Kozhikode.

The most awaited part of the programme was Siddharth Nagarajan's TED talk. He kept the crowd spellbound with his performance and his speech.

"I thought the event would be completely technical but it was good to hear inspiring stories about their life," said Ishwarya S, 3rd year student of KGISL Institute of Technology, Coimbatore.

Students make waves!

Anushree Madhavan

Renu Unnikrishnan

Detecting a lurking submarine in the high seas, negotiating a whirlpool in a boat and making a concrete boat.

All these and other innovative skills of Amrita's budding engineers are on display in the form of games at the Olympic-size swimming pool.

Day one saw 'Submarine Hunt' conducted by the Electronics and Communication Engineering department, a game which focused on how to detect a piece of metal placed inside a water tank and calculate the height at which it was kept. The event is the

brain child of Apoorva Kulkarni, who believes that this technique can help the Indian Navy to detect submarines from afar. 'Magnus boat' is another event, conducted by the Aerospace Engineering department. The game is based on the theory that when a boat moves, it creates a whirlpool and hence the participants are supposed to make a model and maneuver it.

"After the boat reaches the finish line, the winners move to the final round where they have to move the boat in the shape of the figure '8'," says P.D. Vesh, a student coordinator.

Day three would present 'Canoe Cult' by the Civil Engineering department.



Amma, Chancellor Amrita University

"Knowledge is like a river. Its nature is to constantly flow. Wherever it can flow, it does so, nourishing culture. On the other hand, the same knowledge, if devoid of values becomes a source of destruction for the world. When values and knowledge become one, there can be no more powerful instrument for the welfare of humankind."

Did You Know?

Amrita has...

A student population of over 12,000 and faculty strength of nearly 1500. When it was started in 1994, there were only 120 students and 13 faculty members.

Around 16 Students' clubs like Ragasudha and Natyasudha dedicated to music and dance respectively. It also has a Nature Club, NSS, Shristi (literary) and many other clubs

Collaborative research projects with around 35-40 International Universities like New York University, University of Arkansas etc. and 10-15 National Universities like IIT-Bombay etc.

Around 80 companies including Accenture, Cognizant, Caterpillar, HCL, Infosys, Wipro, TCS, Microsoft, IBM etc. coming every year to recruit Amrita students for placements.



ANOKHA 2011

Feb 8,9,10

Special Edition

Tech Titans Clash at Amrita

Panchami Warrior
Priyanka Victor

With Anokha entering its second day, there was a heightened interest in the various competitions that carry attractive prize money.

Hiker, a robotic event in which a rope-climbing robot fetches sheet metal objects, proved to be quite challenging. Only one team from Jaya Engineering College, Chennai, was able to complete the task and retrieve all ten objects.

The team comprising Hari Krishnan B, Dinesh Kumar, Narasimhan, Lo-

gish B and Manivannan won the first place and a cash prize of Rs. 18,000. "No other team had the rotating and the pick up and drop motions that our design had and this gave us an edge," said Narasimhan.

In ETA XX Mins, an engineer's treasure hunt of sorts, the participants had to design a receiver that can locate the transmitter hidden in the sprawling campus. Only two teams managed to locate it. D Gokul, P Dinesh Kumar, A. S Kamala Kannan and P Ashok from Sri Krishna College of Engineering, Coimbatore won the first place and a cash amount of Rs. 8000.

Utilitarian Wars had nine teams working on a military tank model capable of clearing land mines. Prize winners were determined on the basis of mechanism, structural design and maneuverability.

Chamber of Secrets of the Chemical department, is all about efficient energy transfer, and had participants from NIT Warrangal, Government College, Thrissur and Sastra University. The three teams had to try and increase the temperature of KCl, a temperature depressant, placed in a chamber. Phani Krishna. S, Mounika Krishna.M and Deekshith K.



Participants at a technical event

GLIMPSES FROM CAMPUS



Dr.G Madhavan Nair, former ISRO Chairman reading the ANOKHA special edition of Campus Beats



Students waiting for security check

EVENTIDE: The stage is all yours, Amritians!

Anjana Anand
Vidya Venugopal

The day begins as a grueling challenge demanding focus and concentration, but ends in fun and laid back relaxation. The 'Eventide' cultural celebrations help everyone to end the day on a high note.

If it was the beats of the "Shingari melam" of the Kerala drummers that brought many to their feet before volunteers doused some of the enthusiasm on the first evening, it is the turn of Amrita's own entertainers to bask in the limelight of 'Beat route' tonight. The performance will be a mix of music and dance with individual bands like Shadjaw (Ettimadai), Distortion culture (Bangalore) and Bleed (Amritapuri) performing, apart from 'Ragasudha', the music club of the Ettimadai campus.

"We are performing a fusion and the theme is about the ironies and conflicts of life - divine and human intentions; the journey of life that revolves around these with the worldly pleasures that keeps disturbing us in between," said Sidharth, a member of Ragasudha.

The Bangalore and Amritapuri bands are equally excited to perform this evening just as they are keen to hear their counterparts from other campuses. "The entire Amrita as a team is going to rock the stage today," says Ashwin, member of the band Bleed. Meanwhile, the artists of 'Natyasudha' and

'Amrita Nrityakshram' of the Ettimadai campus would be dancing to three numbers, covering classical, hip hop and fusion styles. "We would be performing a Pushpanjali based on the theme 'Amma's Brahmasthanam' that has Devi, Ganesha, Shiva and Rahu on four sides of a pillar" says Sarangi V.L, one of the artists of Amrita Nrityakshram.

There is palpable excitement among the students. "We have heard that Amrita's programmes have a strong cultural grounding, capable of enthraling audience from all backgrounds alike. However, today, for a change, there would be rock and light music and we simply cannot wait" says Jaswanth, of Mahalingam College, Coimbatore.



The 'Shadjaw' performing

What they said...

As told to Lakshmi Sivadas and Mrinal Mehta

"I found the quiz to be too formal for my liking, but it was good fun"
- Aravind Ramachandran of Venkateswara College, Chennai who was a participant in the quiz.

"Anokha is a lot more organized than any other fest I've been to. But I feel that the workshops held were too theoretical and its timings clashed with all other events."
- Dom Jeffrey of NIT, Trichy.

"The project stalls were brilliant, especially the CSE stall, which showcased a fourth year's project on social networking. I found that project amazing."
- R.P.Singh from A.V.I.T, Chennai

"I loved the place but I feel that there should be improvements in hospitality, stuffing five people in a single room is very uncomfortable."
- Rahul Anand, A.V.I.T, Chennai

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