

Amaradeva Enchants Washington Audiences

Dr. K.W. D. Amaradeva's successful musical tour in the US in 2006, *Amara Piyasara*, included a memorable concert in the Greater Washington DC. This was held at Albert Einstein High School Auditorium in Kensington, Maryland on April 8, 2006.

There is no doubt that this concert was an unqualified success. As the crowds started filling the auditorium, the sense of expectation gradually began to grow. The mood was created initially by the stage décor, the lighting and the graceful dance of welcome presented by the Sri Lanka Youth Dance Group. The lights dimmed and the orchestra was introduced through poetry. The three-hour concert was on its way. Dr. Amaradeva was accompanied by his professional team of musicians that included Mr. D.D. Gunasena, Mr. Hemapala Gallage, Mr. Nalaka Anjana Kumara and Mr. Suresh Maliyadde.

Dr. Amaradeva cast a spell on the audience right from his first song. The smooth velvet of his yet strong voice filled the auditorium, creating an atmosphere of home away from home. He sang classical love songs, folksongs and patriotic songs. What was even better, he gave an insight into each song he sang, treating the audience to a colorful array of information, from English to Sinhalese literature, to Buddhism, to Sri Lankan folklore and Indian music history. This was extremely meaningful to the younger audiences whose enjoyment of the music was enhanced by the explanations. Dr. Amaradeva was accompanied by his daughter Subhani, an accomplished vocalist herself.

A highlight of the program was the presentation of a Citation conferred on Dr. Amaradeva by the Governor of Maryland, the Hon. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr., in recognition of his contributions to Sri Lanka's music scene for over five decades. The Secretary of the State of Maryland Ms. Mary D. Kane, who represented Governor Ehrlich on the occasion, read and presented the Citation to Dr. Amaradeva. Mr. Jason M. Chung, Executive Director of Governor Robert Ehrlich's Office on Asian Pacific American Affairs was also present during this event.

The enthusiasm of the Sri Lankan community for the concert was also reflected in the sponsorship for the show. There were 22 Super Golden Sponsors and 33 Super Star Sponsors.

It was a unique concert by a unique musician.

Organizing Committee