

Visharada Sunil Edirisinghe Serenades Sri Lankans in Greater Washington area

Unqualified success of ‘Sandakadapahana’ presented by Apekattiya

A show by Sri Lanka’s musical icon, Visharada Sunil Edirisinghe, is much looked forward to, anywhere. And especially so, when the audience is one so far away from home.

The beauty of a quiet spring evening in Maryland was heightened by the serenading velvety voice of Visharada Sunil Edirisinghe, evoking nostalgic memories for the several hundreds of Sri Lankans who gathered at the Rockville Civic Center in Maryland, to enjoy a musical evening with the maestro, on March 22, 2008.

The classical nature of his songs and the deeply professional quality of his voice have led to Visharada Edirisinghe being one of the leading artistes in Sri Lanka today. Furthermore, as an artiste who engages human emotions to a zenith, he understands and empathizes with nostalgia for home, which is natural when you live so far away from loved ones and your homeland. He also understands it is the cultural links that people tend to cling to in such instances, with a tenacity that is amazing.

Titled ‘Sandakadapahana,’and presented by Apekattiya, Sunil Edirisinghe’s repertoire of songs included many typically Sri Lankan situations that held the audience spellbound. There was no doubt the audience was thrilled by the singer and his songs. The record numbers who turned up at the event appeared unbelievable to even the organizers, especially to founder of Apekattiya, Mr. Dias Amarawardane. As Mr. Amarawardane said afterwards, Sri Lankan music lovers who attended the show that evening praised it as one of the best shows ever held in Washington DC.

Visharada Sunil Edirisinghe was, to a large extent, responsible for the heightened appreciation of his show, through his quality performance and through his easy and friendly interaction with the audience, even as they sat in the semi-darkness.

Enhancing the songs of Visharada Edirisinghe, were his professional group, popular guitarist Mahinda Bandara, keyboard player and music director Suresh Maliyadde, skilled tabla player, Hemapala Gallage and renown violinist Kalani Perera.

What was brought home as an undeniable truth was that a quality cultural program is timeless and will never go waste.