Prathap Ramachandra

Prathap Ramachandra is an internationally acclaimed South Indian Percussionist, having taken his sounds to some of the biggest stages in the world and performed in some of the biggest festivals around the globe.

Born and raised in Bangalore - India, Prathap is deeply rooted in Indian Classical Music, in a genre called Carnatic. He had his initial training from the age of 2 under his brother Prakash Ramachandra, and later advanced training under the guidance of K. N. Krishnamurthy.

He has been a London based artist for the last 12 years, having developed his musical journey in three main areas -  classical concerts, accompanying some of the best musicians and dancers from India and abroad, cross-cultural collaborations in music and dance, and musical training given to different kinds of students. ​He is specialized in Mridangam, Ghatam, Khanjira (South Indian percussion instruments) and Konnakol (vocal technique).

Prathap has been a regular member of many percussion ensembles, having started to travel internationally in 1997, also working with theatre and dance companies. His stage performances have always mesmerized audiences, resulting in important invitations, such as the Head of education at London Tamil Center Mr. Nityanandhan, who offered him a long term teaching assignment at his institution, bringing him to UK where he lives till now.

He has performed in some of the most prestigious venues in UK and Europe - Sadler Wells, Royal Opera House, Queen Elizabeth Hall, etc. as well as in all the major cultural centres of India and toured France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Denmark, Morocco, Malta, Switzerland, Portugal and Canada.

Prathap also specialises in conducting dynamic, powerful and unique interactive drumming workshops and residencies for all age groups and special needs people. He has worked at Gold Smith College London, giving an introductory course on Indian rhythms to students from various musical backgrounds - Jazz, Western classical, multi-percussionists. In the past two year he has been a percussion conductor and composer for the youth orchestra “Samyo”.

**International Festivals he has performed in**

Poland International Festival; Italy River Festival; Tanger International Festival (Morocco); Jaipur Literary Festival; Aldeburgh Poetry Festival (UK); Lille International Festival (France); Krakow International Percussion Festival (Poland).

**Prizes**

He was the only student being awarded by the Government of India with a scholarship to pursue training in Ghatam, at the age of ten. He was also invited for scholarship camp twice at Delhi and Aurangabad where he had the privilege of performing in the presence of the legendary Sarodh musician Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, at the age of 12.

Prathap was also awarded Best Sahavadya award by Bangalore Gayan Samaj at its annual music conference in 1990; winner of the National Level Competition in 1995 conducted by All India Radio for which he was awarded as a Graded artist of All India Radio; stood 1st at the state level competition and represented Karnataka State at the Yuva Utsav competition held in Calcutta in 1997.

**Artists he played with**

Musicians: Padamabushan Dr. Balamurali Krishan , Mandolin U.Srinivas, Flute Shashank, Bombay Jayshree. Sanjay Subramanium, Sudha Raghunathan, Unni Krishanan, etc.

Dancers: Anusha Subramanyam, Seeta Patel, Mavin Khoo, Dananjayas, Priya Darshini Govind, etc.

**Selected Projects**

- **Indian Monsoon (1999):** An innovative project involving puppetry and Bharathanatyam, based on ancient Indian stories, commissioned to Annapoorna Dance company;

**- Colour Contact (2004):** Prathap was actively involved in creating the music for this multi-media dance performance commissioned by the Museum of London, exploring the city of London and its present history through the eyes of its inhabitants.

**- Wil ‘o the wisps (2005):** This project, directed by Tim Yealand, celebrates the 200th anniversary of the birth of one of Europe's finest authors, Hans Christian Andersen. Prathap faced the challenges of creating innovative ways of presenting Carnatic Music in Western Theatrical productions, having done his first participation also as an actor;

**- A House on the Moon (2007):**

Prathap was involved as a musician and rhythm composer in this community opera project, an extremely successful collaboration between ETO, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton Music Service and West Midlands Refugee Arts. 5 months of workshops led to 2 performances of a full-length new opera. Nearly 200 people – amateur and professional – from every background and of every ability took part as singers, actors, players, dancers and filmmakers.

**- Little Red Chunni (2007):** This delightful and unusual cross-cultural production in partnership with Indian dance company Beeja, is a partially bilingual version of the story *Little Red Cap* by the Brothers Grimm. It involved dramatised storytelling, Baratanatyam dance and mridangam playing.

**- Unlocking Creativity (2009 – 2010):** Prathap was invited consecutively for three year as a composer, mentor and musician for this ground breaking residential choreography course organized by Kadham. This course aimed to develop understanding skill and craft of dance making. He had the pleasure of working with some well know contemporary dancers like Jonathan Burrows, Hari Krishna, Eva Recacha;

**- Research on Bharatanatyam and Balinese Dance (2004):** Bharatanatyam performer Chitra Sundaram, Balinese performer Ni Madhe Pujawati and Prathap Ramachandra conducted a cross culture dance and music research from SOAS. The investigation resulted in a theatre piece involving an exploration of Bharatanatyam and Balinese performance traditions and an exploration of South Indian rhythms and melodies and Balinese gamelan music;

- **The ‘Mahabharata Extravaganza’ (2007):**

Prathap was invited to lead a six musicians team to create music on Mahabharatha. The presentation has marked the end of the three-year research project, intended to strengthen links between SOAS as an academic institution and the wider community;

**- Sthreedom – ‘The Good Wife' (2013):** The performance interprets tales of two legendary chastity icons: Arundhati from India, in whose name virgin brides swear fidelity, and Penelope from Greece, waiting for a husband gone for twenty years. It was a challenging task to create an Indian classical piece to fit into two different cultures;

**- Rhtyhm Yatra (2012-present):** This musical project led by Prathap involves a team of internationally renowned artists to present a unique sound harnessing the power of percussion. Rhythm Yatra has collaborated with all different backgrounds and traditions, such as Tharun Bhatacharya (santoor player), Behanam Samani (Iranian multipercussion player), Shri popularly know as Badmash & Shri (popular asian underground music).