

# Meet musicians from Bengaluru making melodies on World Music Day

From the classical strains of Carnatic to the infectious beats of rock, there is something for every musical taste in Bengaluru

**B**engaluru seamlessly blends traditional musical roots with modern genres, creating a captivating fusion of sounds. From the classical strains of Carnatic and Hindustani music to the infectious beats of rock, jazz, and electronic genres, there is something for every musical taste. The city boasts a thriving live music culture, with numerous ve-

nues, cafes, and clubs hosting talented musicians, bands and independent artists. Bengaluru's music scene serves as a melting pot, nurturing emerging talent and providing a platform for artistic expression, making it a haven for both aspiring and seasoned musicians. We look at a few musicians doing something special this World Music Day:

## Sruthi VJ

"I wanted to bring out the gravity of loss felt by the survivors," says Sruthi Vijayachandran (Sruthi VJ) whose single, *Snatched Away*, drops on June 21. The heart-wrenching song which begins with a voice clip of Sandy Phillips, herself a survivor and the co-founder of Survivors Empowered, a support group for people who have lost loved ones in mass shootings "is a heartrending pop ballad about the anguish of a parent who has lost their child to a tragic school shooting."

The idea for the song began in June of last year, soon after the mass shoot-out at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas on May 24. "There have been many such incidents, of course, but this one really shook me," says Sruthi, who shuttles between Bengaluru and California. "The fact that it took close to an hour and a half for law enforcement to confront the shooter was so frustrating. The song was born out of that frustration." She began reading up and listening to the stories of people who had survived the loss of their loved ones in mass shoot-

ings, even reaching out to some survivors. "I wanted to bring out the survivors' perspective, the gravity of the loss they experience," says Sruthi, whose music is usually a blend of both Western and Indian influences, courtesy her own professional background and training.

This one, however, is different, she says. "It is not for me as an artist but a way to create awareness about something on all our minds," she admits, adding, "Art is a really powerful medium to create awareness about things that demand attention."

-- Preeti Zachariah



## From Mug to Mike

Sunil Koshy used to be among the scores of people with an IT job in Bengaluru but whose passion lay elsewhere. He had to choose between songs and software – love and livelihood. Juggling both worked for a bit. But the more he was into music, the more it allured him. Around him, he saw more people, untrained in music but always eager to sing. This unrecognised tribe of bathroom singers, he realised, did not have a proper platform. So, in 2013, Sunil quit his job. With his wife, Archana, he started From Mug to Mike, wherein amateur singers can hone their hobby.

have had doctors, managers, professors, homemakers, and students joining us. People now recognise From Mug to Mike," he says.

Sunil also collaborated with some big names in Indian playback singing, including KS Chitra, Hariharan, Kumar Sanu, and P Srinivas. "One of our participants sang a duet with Kumar Sanu," he says, "We have tried to be a bridge between the music industry and the general public."

For World Music Day, Sunil has composed and sung an anthem, 'Sur Mein Rangeen Hui', with seven From Mug To Mike participants, including software professionals, a bank manager and a dentist. The song will be on From Mug to Mike's YouTube channel.

Sunil and his wife often produce an anthem for a few special days in the calendar such as Women's Day, Disability Day and Music Day, wherein they involve participants who have never sung in a studio before. In this regard, Sunil and Archana's decade-old venture has lived up to its name. For, people literally go from holding mugs to microphones.

-- Praveen Sudevan



We have tried to be a bridge between the music industry and the general public.

SUNIL KOSHY  
founder, From Mug to Mike



## SD Aravinda

Kannada film director and composer-singer, SD Aravinda has composed a song, 'Haadu Beke Beku', to celebrate World Music Day.

The song, a poem written by Basavaraj Okkunda, is composed by Aravinda who has also sung it and made it into a music video, which will be released today on his YouTube channel, Goals & Dreamz, as part of World Music Day celebrations.

"I believe we do not need one specific day to celebrate music as it is blended in nature and has a positive impact on the listener. We listen to songs when we workout, walk, drive. A dedicated day for music only makes it more special.

I have always launched a song or music video for festivals and pre-programmed our national anthem with children for Children's Day. This song is my small contribution to celebrate World Music Day."

Okkunda is Aravinda's professor from his college days, whom he met after many years. "I was looking to compose something unique and my professor's poem appealed to me which led to our collaboration and the release of the song."

-- Shilpa Anandraj

## Thermal And A Quarter and MoonArra

Perhaps one of the city's best-known bands, Thermal and a Quarter has certainly stood the test of time. Founded by guitarist and singer-songwriter Bruce Lee Mani along with drummer Rajeev Rajagopal in 1996, the band is all set to release their ninth album.

"World Music Day is very, very special for Thermal and a Quarter (TAAQ). Early on in our career, we would look forward to performing at all free events organised on this day to promote budding musicians and live music. The audiences at World Music Day events are also genuine live music lovers and it was great building a reputation amongst these audiences. It's a great occasion for all musicians," says Rajeev Rajagopal,



drummer and co-founder of TAAQ.

The band's USP is also their muse – their music centres around the city of Bengaluru. Their love for the city has seen them play at varied venues, irrespec-

tion in the world today. It brings people from all walks of life and geographical locations together with its message of peace, goodwill and communal harmony which is vital in the arts today," says Jagdeesh MR, guitarist and co-founder of MoonArra.

MoonArra melds jazz, Indian classical music and world musical in their work, marking their own place in the city's music scene from 2006. Jazz, classical music and world music being an acquired tastes, MoonArra's offerings will appeal to certain palates only.

Currently, the band is on their 10<sup>th</sup> international concert tour, performing in Sweden, Germany, Austria, Italy and Hungary.

-- Ruth Dhanaraj



**Universal relaxant** Artists across genres believe in the healing power of music. (Right) Thermal and a Quarter (inset) MoonArra SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## CITYBEATS



### Symphony on canvas

ON TILL JULY 3, 10AM TO 6PM

This art exhibition titled 'The Kingdom Of Tigers,' is described as a solo symphony in nature's realm and features the works of Anup Kumar Chand. The paintings capture the world of tigers, and reflect the artist's deep connection with it. Ashok says his works radiate the power, grace and inherent beauty of tigers, transporting you to their realm through his intricate brushstrokes and vibrant colours. On at Gallery G, The Atrium, Lavelle Road.



### Storytime

JUNE 23, 7PM

Atta Galatta presents "Love Stories From Indian Heritage," which is a story telling session for adults by Vikram Sridhar. From folklore and mythology to tales hidden in oral literature, the performance will be peppered with "emotions garnished with prose and poetry," says Vikram. The event is open to those aged 16 years and above. Tickets, ₹250, available on BookMyShow. At Atta Galatta Indiranagar.



### Make your own pots

JUNE 25, 10AM TO 11AM

There will be a pottery workshop for adults and children. The aim of the workshop is to connect with each other and to forge a connect with the earth, play with clay and be open to ideation and creativity through the art of pottery. It will also enable hand-building techniques such as pinching, coiling and slab making. Tickets on Townscript and the venue is Lahe Lahe, Indiranagar. Call 9886294444.



### Of maps and museums

JUNE 25, 11AM ONWARDS

If you have a passion to engage with museum exhibits, then this one is for you. MAP's Education team will conduct a 'Drop In Session – make a map' where you can look closely at a chosen museum exhibit to unleash your creativity and explore their collections. This session is open to participants of all ages, who are willing to experiment with new material. The event is free of charge. At MAP Bengaluru, HDFC Ltd Learning Centre