

Long biography (English)

Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji · ~500 words

Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji is an Indian classical musician and composer whose music for meditation has been performed in concert halls on six continents over four decades.

Born on 26 May 1942 in southern India, he grew up in a household where Vedic chanting and Indian classical music were daily practice. His earliest training came from his mother, a yogini, and continued within the family after her early passing. His musical lineage traces back to Govinda Dikshitar and his son Venkatamakhin, the seventeenth-century theorist who codified the 72-melakarta system that organises Carnatic music to this day.

In 1966, at the age of twenty-four, he founded the ashram in Mysuru that remains his home base. The ashram has grown over six decades into a centre that includes a music hall, a recording studio, a Vedic school, a museum, and one of the largest bird sanctuaries in India.

His artistic work centres on a synthesiser programmed with over a thousand sounds he has personally selected, supplemented by an ensemble of master musicians on violin, flute, mridangam, and tabla. The Celestial Message Troupe has accompanied him on tour for more than two decades. Many of India's most celebrated classical musicians, including Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, the late Pandit Jasraj, the late Ustad Zakir Hussain, the late S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, and Dr. L. Subramaniam, have performed his compositions or shared the stage with him.

His decades-long research into ragas, Nada Yoga, and music therapy has been recognised by universities on three continents. He has received four honorary doctorates: a 2026 doctorate in Nada Yoga from Vedic Wellness University in Florida, conferred together with the title "Nada Yoga Sarvabhauma" on 15 February 2026; a 2023 doctorate in music from Karnataka State Dr. Gangubai Hanagal Music and Performing Arts University in Bengaluru, presented by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot; a 2016 doctorate in literature from the University of World Languages in London; and a 2013 doctorate in music from Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadevaraya University in Bellary for his work in Raga Ragini Nada Yoga.

His first international concert took place on 24 July 1987 in the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Krasnapolsky in Amsterdam. The concert came about by accident: after a small synthesiser was given to him during a stay in Vijayawada in the mid-1980s, a Dutch devotee who heard him play asked permission to organise a programme in the Netherlands. In the four decades since, he has performed 377 concerts across 33 countries, in venues that include the Royal Albert Hall in London (2012), the Lyric Theatre in Johannesburg (2013), the Sydney Opera House (2015), Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center (2008), Dubai Opera (2019), the Kennedy Center in Washington DC (2019), Carnegie Hall in New York (2023), Tonhalle Zurich, KKL Lucerne, the Esplanade in Singapore, and Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi (2026).

He holds thirteen Guinness World Records. Among them: the largest music therapy lesson,

set at the Sydney Opera House on 6 April 2015 with 1,814 participants for two and a half hours; the largest gathering of people chanting, with 128,918 participants; and the largest simultaneous Hindu text recital, with 1,329 participants reciting the Bhagavad Gita.

He has released more than 200 albums of instrumental music, devotional songs, and Sanskrit chant, and has authored dozens of books, the proceeds of which support charitable causes.

In January 2016, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, visited the Mysuru ashram and acknowledged Sri Swamiji's contributions to Indian music and music therapy.

He has put it in three words: music is my religion.

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