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March 2025

## Upcoming Events

15 Mar 2025  
Students Meet up

## Konnakkol

Konnakkol is the art of vocalisation of rhythmic syllables. Rhythmic syllables are called "sollu" and a bunch of them or creating phrases out of them is called "Solkattu" (Sol means syllable and kattu is a Bunch). A bunch of syllables is called Solkattu. Solkattu is basically a Tamil word.

Earlier they were known as different names like Shabdham, Patha, Jathis and thathakaram. But solkattu is a common term used for a bunch of Jathis.

The art of reciting "solkattu" in a musical and aesthetic way is called Konnakkol.

Various solkattu emerged from two main sources which are Karnatak Percussion tradition and the dance tradition like Bharathnatyam.

The drummers, use these rhythmic syllables to learn to play on their respective instruments. Vocal recitation precedes learning to play on the instrument for any drummer in Karnatik Tradition.

While at the beginner level it remains solkattu for the purpose of learning, recitation and execution. At the middle level, solkattu is used to recognize, repeat and learn the artistic or rhythmic nuances. At the advanced level it becomes aesthetic and poetic, thus becoming an Art by itself, which is called Konnakkol.

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# Aurora



Newsletter by Amrithavarshini Belgie

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The first artiste to bring Konnakkol as an art form into the limelight is credited to Konnakkol Pakkiri Pillai. Many others recited Konnakkol in concerts of whom we know that T H Subhashchandran was a pastmaster in this art and has numerous disciples to his credit. Recently we have Somasekar Jois who is doing yeoman service to preserve and propagate this art through a dedicated Konnakkol Academy.

Apart from this each and every percussion artiste must be adept at vocal rendition of Jathi and they have all been masters in this art so far. A student or an artiste gets a better understanding of the logical movement only through Konnakkol method. The masters and the current performers have all been able to render Sollkattu in an artistic way to impart Jathi training to their students and also during lecture-demonstrations.

Different methods of renditions have been in vogue and they co-exist and mingle so beautifully with the system that the art is really alive and being widely used. In the beginning of 20th Century, Konnakkol artistes were used as part of concert accompaniments along with Violin, Mridangam and Ghatam etc. Such concerts where, many accompaniments, including Konnakkol, were used then they were called "Full-Bench Concerts" which is a rarity these days. Except some of the extinct art forms like use of Gethu Vadya as accompaniment in concerts, Konnakkol as art form still thrives as the art of learning South Indian rhythm precedes learning rendition of Sollkattu. Learning the rhythmic language in sollkattu is fundamental to both music and dance and hence as long as Music and Dance live learning Sollkattu will also thrive.

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