



## Harmonizing Sound, Music, and Well-Being: The Svaram Experience

### Description

Abhishek's dedication to sound therapy and his association with Svaram, a pioneering hub for sound and music, reflect his passion for harnessing the healing potential of sound and enriching lives with the power of sound experiences.

Sound therapy is a healing touch for the body and mind, an emerging concept in the world yet relatively unexplored in India. Svaram, the sound garden, is a pioneering effort to introduce and emphasize the healing potential of sound to the Indian populace. It serves as a hub for musical instruments and research, exploring the diverse aspects of music derived from various sources.



## **The Colour of Sound**

**C**Abhishek KR, a dedicated sound enthusiast and researcher in sound healing who recently joined Svaram to focus on sound-related research, laid emphasis on the term “sound experience.” Explaining that it is more appropriate than healing or therapy as it aims to provide not only solutions to problems but also enhanced quality of life through enriching sound experiences at Svaram.

## **Vision of Svaram**

Svaram is the brainchild of Aurelio C Hammer, an ethnomusicologist- cum- sound healer, who conceptualised this sound garden in Auroville, Tamil Nadu.

default watermark





## **Tune in to find inner equilibrium**

Their motto is to harmonise the rich Indian musical and craft traditions with global academic musicology, sound studies, research, contemporary design, and innovation. This fusion resonates with the distinct spiritual and futuristic vision of Auroville, which pioneers the experiment of Human Unity.

### **Exploring the Interplay of Sound and Nature: Abhishek KR's Journey**

Abhishek KR, originally from Bengaluru, embarked on a career dedicated to the world of sound. He completed his studies at Hyderabad Central University, after which he spent a decade working for an NGO in Nilgiris. It was during this time that Abhishek developed a strong affinity for sound and its connection to nature. His journey eventually led him to Auroville, where he has been associated with Svaram for the past eight years.

default watermark



## **Musical Rainbow: A student from Mumbai visiting the sound garden?**

Abhishek's research focuses on the intricate relationship between sound and nature. He explores how sounds can be harnessed to capture the essence of nature, whether through lyrics, installations, instruments, or unconventional soundscapes. His work delves into the transformative power of sound, creating a unique and immersive experience that connects people to the world around them.

Sound Therapy, as Abhishek explains, is a unique approach that renounces composition. He adds, "We use sound and frequencies within the sound to work with the body. While music therapy transitions from a physical to a cognitive space, I believe some therapies achieve a better balance and even facilitate the quieting of the cognitive mind, allowing the body to delve into a deeper state of relaxation. It represents an entirely different approach to the concept of well-being. However, it's not entirely curative and reflexive like allopathy. Instead, it's primarily about establishing a connection with your body in a way that helps you discern your body's genuine needs. In a nutshell, our aim with sound therapy is to assist individuals in identifying the balance within their own bodies."

## **Svaram's Diverse Soundscape**

Sound is inherently a vibration. In its simplest form, a singular "Raa" is a sound, but a string of "Raa's" follows a rhythmic pattern and is transformed into music.

This structure of sound can manifest in various instruments. Instruments harness the power to elicit emotional, physical, and psychological responses. Svaram recognizes that instruments are tools of expression and boasts a wide collection, ranging from the elegant Veena to the enigmatic sonic stone, Gonga, to an assortment of flutes. Each of these instruments brings its unique character, allowing for a profound exploration of the sensory dimensions of sound and music.

At Svaram, music is created using an array of naturally occurring materials, including wood, seeds, bamboo, shells, clay, etc. People are drawn to this sound haven not just to experience the galaxy of instruments but also to find solace in the soothing effect of sound therapy. Consequently, Svaram prioritizes the holistic well-being of those who seek their services

## **Empowering Communities: The Artisans Behind Svaram's Instruments**

The artisans of Svaram possess a remarkable approach to their work. They not only construct these instruments but also immerse themselves in the musical experience, customizing these musical treasures for people worldwide. These instruments have evolved into sonorous works of art that enrich the acoustic tapestry of human culture.







## The room of sound balance

The instruments displayed at Svaram are crafted by villagers from the nearby hamlets in the Villupuram district and Puducherry. These artisans, who are primarily employed as wage labourers in farming and construction, have found a new lifeline in this institute. Over 100 villagers indirectly rely on “Svaram” for their livelihood. The institute’s management has played a vital role in improving their quality of life by helping them clear debts, covering school fees for workers’ children, and addressing their families’ medical expenses.

Furthermore, these workers are not just artisans; they are also trained to play these instruments and actively participate in stage performances. The craftsmen at “Svaram” consistently go the extra mile by not only creating and shipping the instruments but also traveling to install them in various locations worldwide.

## Sound Therapy: Navigating the Spectrum of Well-Being

Sound therapy guides the nervous system through distinct sound phases. These phases range from overall nervous system relaxation to the application of specific frequencies, each sound having a unique impact on the body. Certain sounds promote muscle relaxation, addressing muscle tension, while others predominantly engage the cognitive realm.

This approach to well-being is intricate and differs from conventional curative methods like allopathy. It’s primarily about establishing a profound connection with one’s body, enabling a better understanding of its true needs. In sound therapy, there are no fixed compositions; therapists employ sound to assess how an individual’s body responds and tailor their approach accordingly.

According to Abhishek, you don’t need a music background to participate in Sound Therapy. He himself is not a trained musician, but his experience with sound enabled him to master his art. Students from various Indian states and around the world come to learn and experience this practice. The joy of this art enhances the beauty of the learning process.

Abhishek puts emphasis on the significance of balancing seriousness with playfulness in our endeavors. He implores the importance of avoiding excessive rigidity to allow for a more fluid and enjoyable journey. He succinctly puts it, “While professionalism has its place, the exploration of oneself need not always adhere to strict professionalism.”

“In a nutshell, what we’re trying to do with sound is to help people identify their own balance in their body and give them a better way of experiencing sound.

–By Soumoshree Mukherjee  
–Edited by Lipsa Akkala

## Category

1. On the wings of the muse

## Tags

1. Photo Story
2. Photojournalism
3. Pondicherry
4. Pondicherry University

## Date Created

November 4, 2024

## Author

admin

default watermark