



# TRINIDAD and TOBAGO 'TAAN' ICON PASSES ON

By Ramesh D. Kalicharran

Solona Girdharrie popularly known as "SOLO" hails from Forest Park, Claxton Bay in Trinidad. He was born on June 26, 1945 and died on January 11, 2015 in New York. Solo came from a family of renowned singers. He was the nephew of two Maestros Sohan & Mohan who were household names in Trinidad.

According to Dudley Ayoub Khan, when Solo was approximately 18 years of age, he won his 1st singing competition which was sponsored by the San Fernando Red Cross organization held at the Debe Community Center.

Solo competed against the most formidable adversary at the time of Henry Toolum Dindial from then there was no turning back for Solo.

Solo was very much encouraged to pursue classical singing by established classical singer Arjun Samlal and his uncle Sohan Girdharrie.

Sham Rampersad was from the most 'sought' after person whom Solo choose to arrange his music for his L/P called "Glimpses of Glory", 47 years ago. From then Sham emerged as a prominent music director, and Solo remained a close friend of Sham; just last year Sham rendered music for Solo.

Speaking with Sham, following this great loss, it is evident that this friend is saddened by Solo's demise, especially in the manner that Sham reminisced over Solo for his versatility in music as a whole, and just not just as a Taan singer but a virtuoso of Classical, Semi-classical, Filmy, Bhajans, Geet and Ghazals. No doubt, this very versatile artiste will be missed by all.

Nazir Khan (Naaz) a recording artist and who sings the closest to Hemant Kumar vividly re-

calls Solo performing on stage several times with the stalwarts in Trinidad. Naaz concluded, "When it comes to classical singing especially 'Taan Sen' style Solo is Boss, he will surely be missed.

Two decades ago when the Hon Basdeo Panday was Prime Minister, Solo was instrumental in forming Trinidad and Tobago Classical Singing Association. He participated and won several competitions and, undoubtedly, was a role model for younger aspiring musicians. He was an international artiste and performed in several countries including Holland, Guyana, Canada and London.

Solo shared the stage with many Notables including Yousuff Khan, Isaac Yankarran, Jameer Hussain, Haniff Mohammad, K.D. Singh and even with Ustaad Ramdhani Sharma.

Community and Cultural activist, who keep the tradition of "Mastana Bahar", Shri Anoop Dhanpat, said the passing of Solo is a great loss of Taan Singing.

Recording artiste and a fellow Classical/Taan singer, Rodan Sookraj recalls not only was Solo an excellent Taan singer but he had a good knowledge of the history of music, and a good grasp of Hindi.

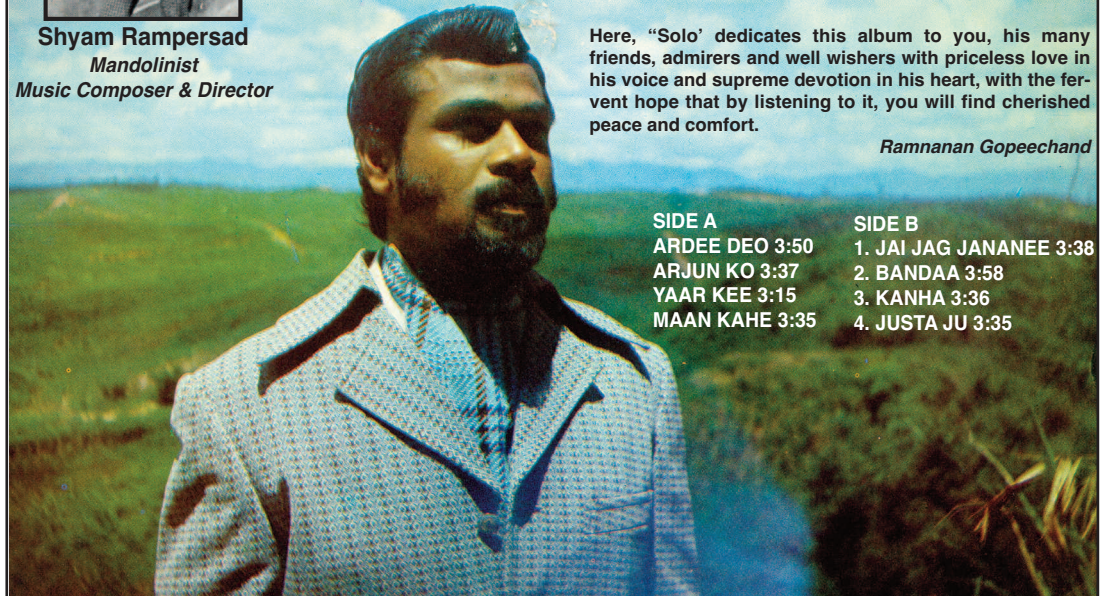
Founding Life Member, and former General Secretary of NCIC in T&T and school teacher in New York, Dudley Ayoub Khan echoed the same sentiments. He said, "Solo's demise certainly leaves a void in singing especially in the style of Taan."

It is interesting to note that the song 'Nanda Baba' was the brainchild of "Solo". In fact, on his first Album 30 years ago, 'Nanda Baba' was one of the songs Solo sang on that Album; the music was rendered by

## Glimpses of Glory by Solo Girdharrie



Shyam Rampersad  
Mandolinist  
Music Composer & Director



### ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS ALBUM READS:

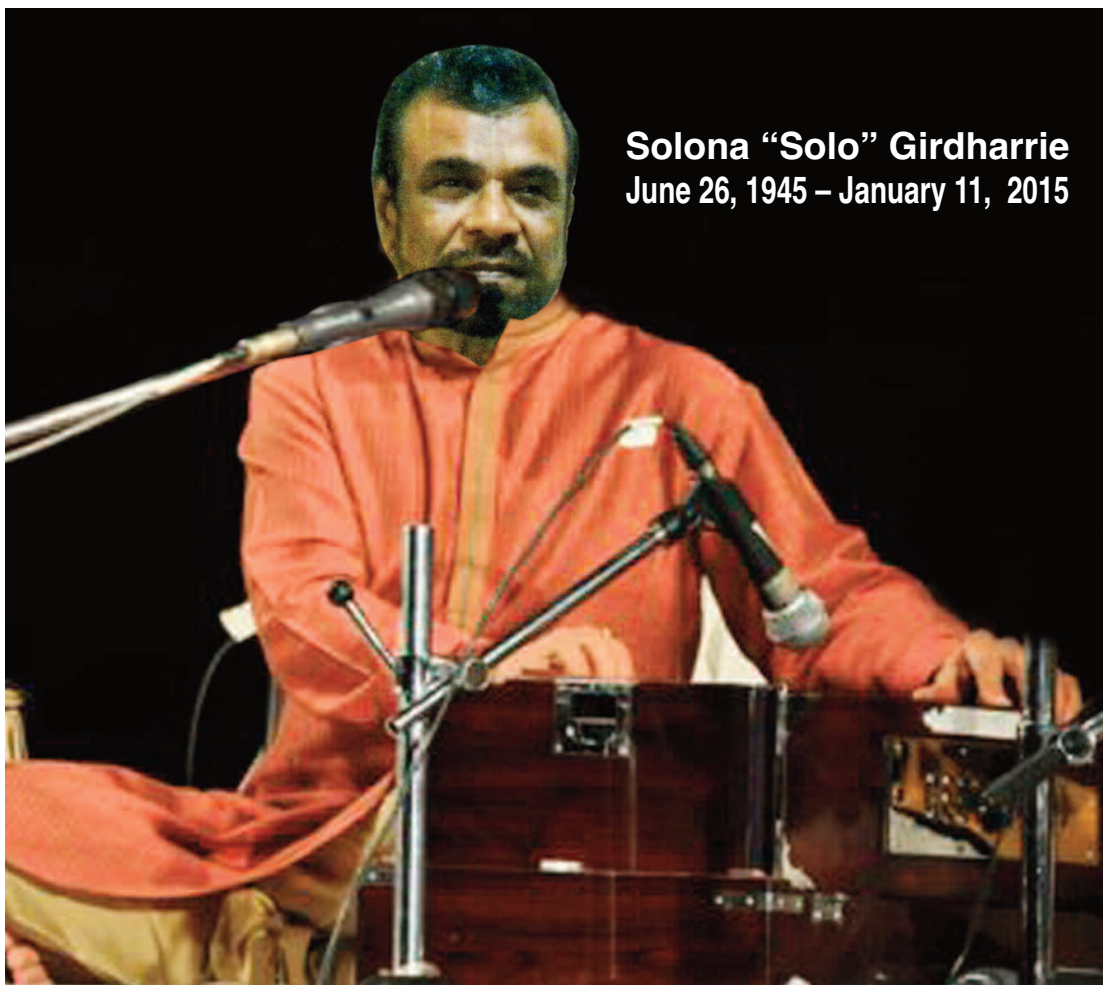
GLIMPSES OF GLORY is a masterpiece. It marks a distinguishable development in the field of Indian Singing and Music in the Western Hemisphere. The performances of the artistes in this album demonstrate a high degree of creativity, dedication, versatility and professionalism.

Solona Girdharrie - "Solo" as he is popularly called, is the nephew of popular classical singer, Sohan Girdharrie. In his short career so far, in the field of Indian Singing, "Solo" has made an indelible impression in the history of this art. With his sanguine personality, he has radiated inspiration, admiration, love and affection amongst the thousands who have heard him.

Here, "Solo" dedicates this album to you, his many friends, admirers and well wishers with priceless love in his voice and supreme devotion in his heart, with the fervent hope that by listening to it, you will find cherished peace and comfort.

Ramnanan Gopeechand

- |                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>SIDE A</b>  | <b>SIDE B</b>           |
| ARDEE DEO 3:50 | 1. JAI JAG JANANEE 3:38 |
| ARJUN KO 3:37  | 2. BANDAA 3:58          |
| YAAR KEE 3:15  | 3. KANHA 3:36           |
| MAAN KAHE 3:35 | 4. JUSTA JU 3:35        |



Solona "Solo" Girdharrie  
June 26, 1945 – January 11, 2015

Narendra Ramdular, but then the song 'Nanda Baba' was subsequently sung and recorded by Anand Yankarran. Kudos to both singers. Anand's version had a different tempo, with an upbeat, and was certainly a favorite of all. We wish Solo a musical journey to Vaikunt: Ram naam, satya hai.

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