

A World Beyond Entertainment

Austrian globetrotter Aurelio chose the tranquility of Auroville to settle down and commence his exploration into the healing power of music

G PATTABI RAMAN

By **DAKSHAYANI KUMARAMANGALAM**

Forget the puzzling “sound magician” description Aurelio A C Hammer tags to himself in his website — and meet the Austrian musician open-mindedly. You realise he does a lot more with music than just entertain people.

“Traditionally, the musician is also the healer,” he explains. “In India, music still has a sacred connect..”

If Aurelio, 50, is today a sound healer, aside from composing music and performing on occasion, there's a story behind it. In younger days, he travelled across 40 countries round the world before settling in Pondicherry's Auroville a couple of decades ago. There, he began exploring the healing nature of music. And began using a more traditional method that uses music, or sound, to evoke emotions. How? He demonstrates with the hypnotic vibrations from his sound-healing board.

“Sound healers need no prior training in music,” says Aurelio, who tutors people in his art. Plus, there is Svaram, a research and experiment project he began as a social outreach and vocational training programme for villagers around Auroville. Now, eight years later, it is also known for developing certain creative musical instruments: sounding bars, singing stones, wind chimes, frame drums, rattles, string resonators.... All these try to synthesise ancient sounds and modern music.

“People of any age can handle them,” says Aurelio. Svaram members perform too. Aurelio's “community enterprise” is complete.

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With sounding bars, Aurelio synthesises ancient sounds and modern music