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Tyagaraja Aradhana 2020



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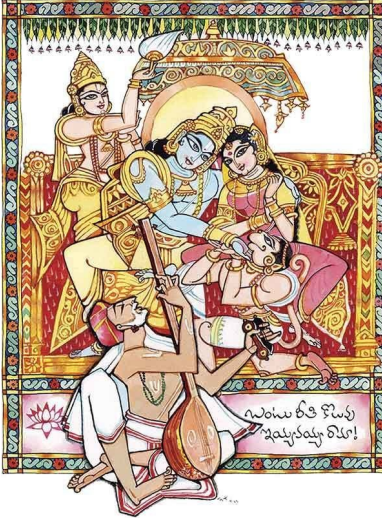
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Tyagaraja Aradhana 2020

A humble *namaste* from the SMC team!

As we re-dedicate ourselves to serving the community through the divine art of Carnatic music, our grateful *pranaams* go to to the ever-swelling numbers of rasikas, music teachers, artistes, and (most importantly), the corpus of volunteers whose selfless service makes events such as the annual Tyagaraja Aradhana possible.



On the auspicious occasion of the Aradhana, it befits us to introspect on the importance that Saint Tyagaraja attaches to *naama-samkirtana* (choral recitation of the names of the Lord). This is particularly relevant in this day and age when most of us – caught up in the hurdles of our daily existence – cannot conduct elaborate poojas, or visit pilgrimage spots as often as we would like. Tyagaraja asserts his reformatory zeal in declaring that a concourse of devotees chanting Lord Rama’s name loudly is more pleasing to Him than other forms of worship. The importance accorded to Rama-naama-japa in the Upanishads (particularly the *Rama Rahasyopanishad*) leads Tyagaraja to describe His name as *veda-varna-niyamau* in the Devamanohari song “*Evarikai*”. He also characterises Lord Rama as a *taaraka-naamadheya*, “He whose Name saves one”.



Going a step further, poet Kalidasa says that when Sage Vasistha gave the name Rama to Dasaratha’s first son, he did so because of the effulgent personality of Lord Rama – and Kalidasa adds that the name immediately became the foremost auspicious thing of the world. Tyagaraja, in his Durbar song *Ramabhirama Ramaneeyanama*, says that the name chosen was as charming as the person. This accords with the tenets of the worshippers of the Lord’s name, that the Name is indistinguishable from the Form. The name, therefore, is not merely a means to reach the Lord, it is the Lord Himself. Tyagaraja’s prayer was always that his tongue should become used to the continuous repetitions of the Lord’s name, as he mentions in his Devagandhari song *Sri Raghuvara*. It is intriguing that similar sentiments were expressed by *Sangita Pitamaha* Purandaradasa in the ugabhoga, “Baliya Manege”, wherein he prays that the name of Purandara-Vittala should always be on his lips.

The Tyagaraja Aradhana will see a fascinating cornucopia of the Lord’s names being recited chorally or individually, by participants from different age groups and with different levels of proficiency in music. Nevertheless, the strand joining all of them – much like a thread running through a garland – is a contagious devotion that also permeates the audience. In a way, the Aradhana is as much of a homage to the saint composer as it is a celebration of the divinity in Carnatic music.

We pray to Lord Rama to shower his blessings on all.
Sarve Janaa Sukhino Bhavanthu.



**Bharatiya Vidya
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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्त विश्वतः

Let Noble Thoughts Come to Us from Every side

Affiliated to Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Central Bhavan) Mumbai, India

Founded in 1938 by Kulapati Dr. K.M. Munshi with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia is pleased to support **Annual Tyagaraja Aradhana Music Festival** 2020 presented by Sydney Music Circle in their 37th year. We note that Sydney Music Circle has been providing a forum for both practising and amateur musicians in Sydney via free monthly concerts comprising of a student segment and a senior segment for the benefit of classical music lovers from any community.

We greatly commend their two-day annual music festival during the auspicious month of February celebrating the life and works of one of the greatest saints and composer Sri Thyagaraja. We congratulate the people behind the Sydney Music Circle for their ongoing efforts in preserving and promoting the ancient heritage of Indian classical music.

Headquartered in Mumbai, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, one of the largest cultural organisations in the world, aims at promoting the unifying ideals of Indian philosophic thought through the vehicles of art and culture. Various Kendras (centres) Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, especially in the southern India do honour Sri Thyagaraja with their music festivals and workshops in Carnatic music.

The Sydney Centre, launched in 2003, is the first in Australia (and the first in the Asia Pacific region). Bhavan Australia has been expanding its activities in fields of Arts and Culture. With a view to spread the rich culture as well as to meet the increasing demand of the community Bhavan Australia has undertaken a number of cultural and multicultural projects and publishes high quality content based magazines like **Bhavan Australia** uploaded on www.bhavanaustralia.org and **Nonviolence News**: uploaded on www.nonviolence.org.au.

On behalf of Bhavan Australia I offer my best wishes to Sydney Music Circle and all its artists, volunteers and supporters for the success of their annual music festival preserving the age old Indian classical music.

Gambhir Watts OAM
President
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia
30 January 2020

Endaro mahanubhavulu, a retrospect

Dr Padma Mallela

Mad Bhakta yetra gayanthi Tatra tishtami Narada is a sloka wherein Lord Vishnu himself says, “wherever my devotees sing about me, that is where I live Narada”.

It represents how much of an important part music has in the relationship between a devotee and god. Music is the easiest path to salvation. To better understand how to utilise this path, there is no better way than to study how these devotees, ie composers, offered themselves to the Lord through their work. Let us try to understand bhakti marga through the eyes of Tyagaraja in the classic *Endaro Mahanubhavulu*.

The heart of any composer can be understood through the lyrics he/she writes. It is important to note that improper pronunciation can completely change the meaning of any lyrics. It is almost an insult to the composer’s work when words are pronounced wrong. First of all, we need to note that it is *Endaro* and not *Entharo*, a common mistake that many musicians make. Endaro means many, whereas Entharo, means how much.

When we observe the structure of Tyagaraja’s kritis, the compositions always follow an essay-like construction. They start with an introductory statement in the pallavi, and a statement to back up the argument made in the pallavi through the anupallavi. The charanams usually contain reasons that go into an in-depth justification of the pallavi and anupallavi and finally provide a concluding statement toward the end of the krithi.

In this krithi, the pallavi is:

*Endaro mahanubhavulu,
andariki vandanamulu*

meaning that there are many great people and he (Tyagaraja) offers his namaskarams to all of them. But why does he want to offer his namaskarams and who are these people?

He justifies this in the anupallavi:

*Chanduru varnuni anda chandamulu
hridayara vindamuna juchi brahmananda
manubhavinchu varendaro*

which means that he offers his namaskaram to all those people who experience the moon-like face of Rama in their hearts and go to a state of *brahmananda*, or ecstasy. This is a subtle suggestion that attaining salvation is

Endaro mahanubhavalu, a retrospect (contd.)

as simple as meditating upon god and visualising his (i.e. Rama's) presence through singing his praises. Through that, God can take form in our hearts and take us to a state of samadhi and therefore moksha .

Then come the charanams, which provide a profound explanation of all the qualities a devotee should possess in order to get to that state, and the names of all the great devotees that have these attributes. Through observing them, we provide ourselves a one-way ticket to salvation.

Charanams 1 to 6 focus on the attributes of what makes a devotee pious. They describe how Tyagaraja offers his salutations to all the beings who offer their souls to the lotus feet of Sree Rama. They are void of emotions like *kama*, *krodha*, *mada*, *lobha*, *moha* and *matsarya* and surrender themselves to the blissful *sama gana*.

In the subsequent charanams, he mentions those who enjoy this musical ecstasy and are always in an enlightened state. These beings range from lord Shiva, Sanaka, Sananda, Hanuman, Suka, Narada, Tumburu etc. and also all the "parama bhagavatas" i.e. those who are in constant thought of *bhagavan*. Not only this, but he also specifies that a devotee who seeks this kind of enlightenment should seek refuge in Bhagavatam, Ramayana, Gita, puranas and most importantly, regardless of the kind of school they belong to (Shanmatas like Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakteya, etc.) should view the eternal being as ONE god and be familiar with bhava, raga, tala and they will surely be guaranteed moksha and will forever live in the heart of bhagavad bhaktas.

Compositions like these give a great deal of knowledge to delve into and provide any devotee a proper path to enlightenment. Understanding bhakti through music is a sure shot way of getting one step closer to God, who lives in the heart of the devotees who sing his names and characteristics.

On behalf of Sydney Music Circle, the Organising Committee would like to thank musicians, patrons, rasikas, volunteers and everyone for their support and making Sydney Music Circle's Tyagaraja Aradhana 2020 a grand success.

*Cartoons used in this brochure are sourced from Sruti magazine, Issue 149, February 1997
Quiz questions used in this brochure are sourced from The Sangeetham Quiz Book, 2002*

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Story behind the five gems

V.Sriram

Today, no matter where it happens, the Tyagaraja Aradhana is synonymous with the choral singing of the Ghana Raga Panchamam – the five songs being Jagadaanandakaaraka (*Nata*), Dudukugala (*Gaula*), Saadhinchene (*Arabhi*), Kanakanaruchira (*Varaali*), and Endaro Mahaanubhaavulu (*Sri*), all in Aadi taala. The most famous of the group singing sessions is the one that takes place at Tiruvaissyaru during the Aradhana celebrations of the composer.

And yet, given Tyagaraja's time span (1767 – 1847) and that of the Aradhana (from the early 20th century), this joint rendition is a relatively recent phenomenon. As per an article in the *Aadal Paadal* section of the Ananda Vikatan of 30 January 1949, it was only in that year that the Aradhana's organising committee hit upon the idea as a means of getting all musicians to sing together.

On that Aradhana day in 1949, Bangalore Nagarathnamma, the lady who had built the samaadhi was asked to sing the 108 names of Tyagaraja that she had composed, as verse. This she did even as she performed the *kumbhaharathi* – the traditional right of the Devadaasi. It was followed by Palladam Sanjeeva Rao playing "Chetulaara" on the flute. And then the assembled musicians sang the five songs in chorus. Today, Nagarathnamma's ashtottara-shatha-namaavali of Tyagaraja is forgotten, and the performance begins with the assembled flautists rendering "Chetulaara" following which the Pancharatnam is sung.

Challenging Varali

The week leading to that first choral singing had seen hectic activity. Not all the musicians assembled knew all the songs. The Varali piece in particular posed a challenge given the taboo that existed on learning this raaga directly from a guru.

It was Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer who found a way out. He sang the song from the first floor of a building. The assembled musicians sat a level below and followed him line by line, thereby overcoming the bar on learning songs in Varali directly.

Carnatic music has one of the most complex systems of rhythm in world music. There are 108 classical talams, or cycles of rhythm, that help keep time while rendering a song. Over time, many more talams have been developed, taking their total number beyond 175.

The most often used talam is the eight-beat Adi talam, but there are many other intricate talams. The Simhanandana talam is said to be the world's longest rhythmic cycle, with 108 beats. There are intricate talams like Sarabhanandana, which has 79 beats.

Story behind the five gems (contd.)

This interesting anecdote was related to me by Tiruvaiyaru Chellam Iyer, a veteran of several Aradhanas who passed away in 2019 at the age of 100. Even today, while the remaining four are sung with gusto, “Kanakanaruchira” has muted participation.

Were these songs really grouped by Tyagaraja? It is very difficult to say “yes” with certainty. And what exactly is meant by “ghana” ragaas? This term is given various interpretations and today, we follow Professor Sambamoorthy’s explanation that these are raagas whose “individuality is brought out by playing *madhyamakala* (medium tempo) for taanam.”

Given the importance of taanam playing especially among vainikas, it is interesting to see that the concept of ghana raagas is more evolved among practitioners of that instrument.

In a later addition to the 17th century Chaturdandi Prakasika of Venkatamakhin, we see, according to Dr Premeela Gurumurthy’s monograph, The Ghana Raaga Pancharatna-s of Sri Tyagaraja, the first arrangement of eight ghana raagas. – Nata, Gowla, Varaali, Bowli, Sri, Arabhi, Malavasri, and Ritigowla. Later, there is mention of a second set of five – Kedaram, Narayana Gowla, Salanga Nata, Ritigowla, and Bowli. That the Tyagaraja school was quite familiar with this concept is buttressed by his disciple Veenai Kuppaiyyar’s varnam “Inta Kopa” which has pallavi in Nata, the anupallavi in Gowla, mukthayi swaras in Arabhi and Varaali, and the charanas sequentially in Sri, Narayanagowla, Ritigowla, Natakurinji, and Kedaram. It is clear that while some raagas change in the set, the first five are constant.

But were the five songs ever intended to be sung together? They are not thematically united, unlike the “Kamalaamba Navavarnam” or even the Kshetra Pancharatnas that Tyagaraja composed at Srirangam, Lalgudi, Tiruvottriyur, and Kovur. The songs vary in length and while the Nata piece is in Sanskrit, the rest are in Telugu. The Varali piece was relatively unknown and sung without the swara passages in concerts. In fact it is omitted altogether in Subbarama Dikshitar’s *Sangita Sampradaaya Pradarshini*. In subsequent works such as *Sangita Sudhambudi* (1929), there is mention that the music of many charanas are unavailable.

What was Dikshitar’s mother’s name?

Ans. Subbulakshmi

A song of Muthuswamy Dikshitar which opened the locked doors of a temple. Identify it.

Ans. akshayalinga vibhO

Carnatic music is a phenomenal application of the theory of permutation and combination.

Venkatamakhin derived 72 melakarta ragas as he was a mathematician and musician alike.

Story behind five gems (contd.)

In terms of structure too, the pieces, all excellent individually, have striking differences. There are also variations in the order of charanams as per some lineages of Tyagaraja's disciples. The composer's name appears three times in the Nata song, twice in the Sri piece, and once in the others.

Their grouping was perhaps one of convenience. Historically it was the practice of musicians to sing their favourite pieces immediately after the Aradhana. That worked when just a few were present, or when the three factions in charge of the worship followed individual itineraries. Effective 1941, following the unification, this became difficult.

In 1942, we see the announcement that a Pancharatna kriti would be sung after the Aradhana. This was usually done in pairs. By 1949, the numbers necessitated choral singing and these five became the chosen songs. In retrospect, the choice was for the best.

(Reproduced from "The Hindu", 17 January 2020)

Audience Etiquette

- *Men: dress in veshti and shirt*
- *Women: Wear silk sarees*
- *Switch off your mobile phone*
- *Don't get up or walk out during the concert. It is insulting and distracting to the artistes*
- *Pay attention to the rhythmic part of the concert called Thani Avarthanam*
- *Don't tap the beat on your lap unless you are experienced. If you miss half a beat, you will not only look ridiculous, you will distract your neighbours*
- *Don't sing loudly. A gentle hum below the radar is okay.*



In fond memory of
Sri Voleti Venkateswarlu
1928 - 1989

Critic with a cutting edge

By Gurudev Singh

He always spoke his mind. Artistes both feared and loved him, the media idolised him, and readers lapped up every comment of his. Subbudu (1917 – 2007), who has left behind a legacy of words that had the power to make or mar artistes.

"ARTISTES, beware! Subbudu is in town." Circa 1979, Chennai's December Season. A massive poster, opposite the Music Academy, depicting an artiste as a ghatam and veteran music and dance critic Subbudu as a ghatam player, created a flutter through the city. The poster was a master stroke of V. S. Manian, the founder editor of *Idayam Pesukirathu* (The Heart Speaks), one of Tamil Nadu's leading magazines of the time.

For most artistes, critics and rasikas, across the world, that incident sums up the power of the thin, unassuming personality, who as a performing arts critic, lived a life akin to a political journalist, surviving death threats, physical assaults, lawsuits, and temptation of bribes with courage and humour, in what became the signature reaction of the man every time a mighty artiste or a patron tried to usurp him.

As he exited this mortal world on March 30, 2007 at the age of 90, Subbudu left behind a history of arts writing that reveals the tale of a man of integrity who took on stalwarts such as Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, with daring audacity whenever their performances fell off the mark. Known for his unsparing expression, Subbudu's witty writing and caustic comments even ruffled leaders like former President R Venkataraman whenever their favourite artistes were crushed under the power of his pen.

For someone who wielded tremendous influence in Delhi (because of his weekly column in *The Statesman* since 1950) and Chennai's arts scene (with a range of magazines and newspapers such as *Ananda Vikatan* and *Indian Express*) thanks to his refined knowledge of Carnatic music and classical dance forms such as Bharatanatyam, Subbudu made sure his words and not artistes were remembered in his writings.

The world of Carnatic music allows for some pride and ego on the part of acclaimed musicians (vidwans). In fact, they are expected to be proud people.

Hence the joke: "How many vidwans does it take to change a light bulb?" Answer: "Just one. He stands holding the bulb and the world revolves around him."

Critic with a cutting edge (contd.)

A weighty dancer had to bear a slighting remark on her circumference and a throaty singer was immediately advised retirement from the profession, without any bias.

And Subbudu had to often pay a price for being so opinionated, whether it involved getting his clothes torn by artistes and their fans or witnessing a rush of people shouting slogans "Subbudu, go back" at Thiruvaiyaru, after the man ended up calling Tanjore's musical superiority a myth. However, it was his ability to see the lighter side of such incidents that helped him stay afloat through every crisis he faced. The most striking being the above-mentioned incident, where Subbudu commented, "A poster for an impostor!"

For many, Subbudu created a controversy to stay in the news, but for him, he was the news. No one else could dare and tell Semmangudi, who also happened to be the guru of M.S.Subbulakshmi, "You have an audience of one thousand and I have a readership of one lakh".

Magazines and newspapers made sure they advertised Subbudu's association with them well in advance. His stay at Woodlands Hotel in Chennai was a historic annual affair, with powerful sabha secretaries, established and upcoming dancers, writers and common people making a beeline to have an audience with the man.

And just as his passion for ruining a poor performance gave no quarter even to his friends, his courage to put his weight behind freshers made a star out of Mandolin Srinivas. In fact, in 1989, Subbudu dared Srinivas's competitors to play like him, saying he would shave his head if anyone could better the music genius.

Why did Subrahmanya Iyer acquire the prefix Patnam?

- a. He used the snuff Patnam Podi*
- b. He lived in Nagapatnam*
- c. He lived in Madras for 12 years*
- d. He was from Srirangapatnam*

Ans: c

Patnam Subrahmanya Iyer used all the following mudras, except one. Identify it?

- a. Prabho Venkatesa*
- b. Varada Venkatesa*
- c. Adi Venkateswara*
- d. Sri Venkatesa*

Ans: a

Critic with a cutting edge (contd.)

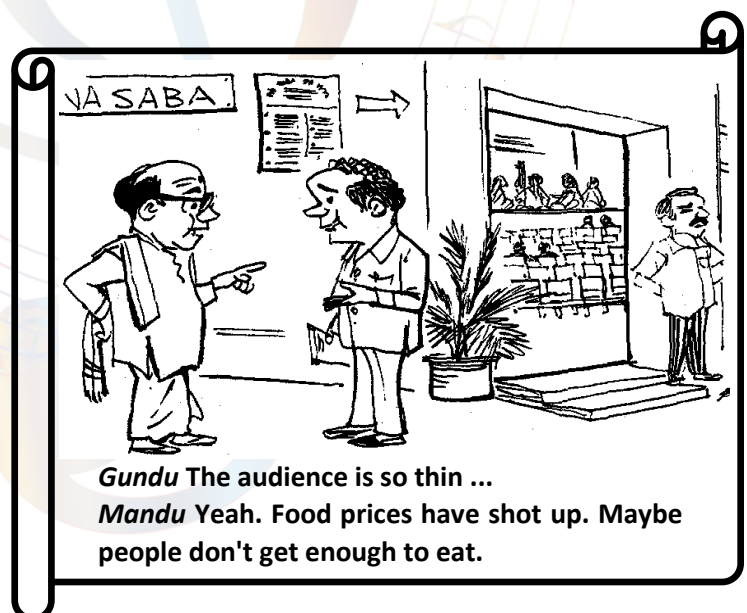
Subbudu's rise on the Indian arts scene ran parallel to the growth of Indian performing arts in post-independent India. The main reason for this was the democratisation of arts. With masses gaining access to singers through radio and music records and dances such as Bharatanatyam and Odissi becoming available to the upper middle class, Subbudu became a focal point of aspirations of the people in the way he could reach out to artistes and cut them to size for their lack of commitment.

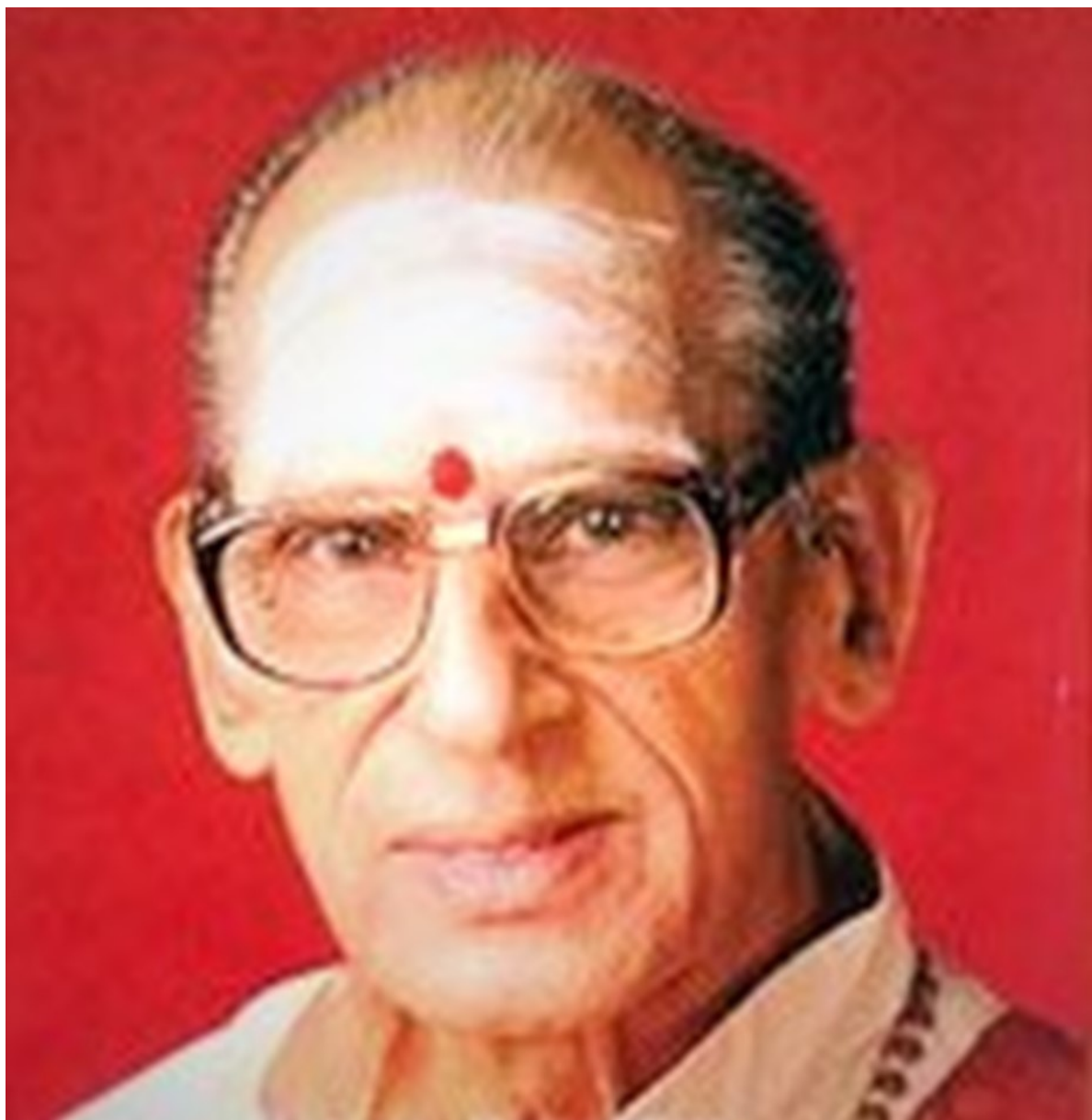
But this heady life, filled with adulation and criticism, was marked by seclusion in the last years. A bout of health problems and lack of connection with the art circuit affected him. Subbudu felt betrayed by those who swore by his name; but, through this time of personal crisis, he was nurtured by his siblings, children and grandchildren, who showered him with unconditional love, knowing fully well that their Subbudu was a man of gestures.

Little things done for him could see him through the hardest times. He may have been a carefree husband and a clueless father, but as a human being he was par excellence. Subbudu had few equals — not because he never sought any favour for mentoring proteges or for ensuring a gold run for an established artiste, but because he made sure, he reached out to even his opponents, at a personal level with an ability to laugh off the most turbulent times of his life, with his phrase, "There will be another day".

At the end of it, Subbudu's demise was perhaps most poignantly felt by President Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, who called on his family with a rose from the Mughal Garden to be placed on his favourite writer's body, just the way, Subbudu had wished.

(Originally published in The Tribune, New Delhi, 7 April 2007)





*In fond memory of
Our revered Guru*

Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy
1927—2014

A Trio that Popularised Dasara Padagalu

*By Smt Charumati Ramachandran and staffers of "Sruti" magazine
(Reproduced from "Sruti" magazine, December 1984)*

Developments of great significance often spring from chance encounters between people who, in retrospect, appear to have been destined to play key roles in them. The renaissance of Purandaradasa's compositions in contemporary Carnatic music is one such development.

The encounter took place at the Madras (as it was then called) home of a native of Udupi by the name of Dr. U. Rama Rao. In 1935 he had a visitor from his home town. His name was Narasimhadasa, and he was an authentic member of the community of dasas which Purandaradasa had established some 450 years earlier. A deeply religious man and an Ayurveda practitioner, he also knew hundreds of songs of the dasas and could sing them properly in the traditional style.

The encounter was at first between him and a musician by the name of Aiyaswamy Iyer who taught music to some members of the Rama Rao family. Aiyaswamy Iyer was fascinated by the divine music of the dasas which the minstrel from Udupi sang with devotion. Dasas who went from door to door singing devarnamas were not entirely unfamiliar in Madras at that time, but somehow this encounter with the visitor from Udupi made a strong impact on Iyer who could not contain his excitement, and lost no time in telling his wife about Narasimhadasa and his songs. His wife Lalithangi was also a musician. Although she had a standing of her own in the world of Carnatic music, she was better known in later years as the mother of M.L.Vasanthakumari.

Venkatamakhin suggested the 72 mela scheme, but how many melas did he actually define in his Chaturdandi Prakashika?

a. 72 b. 21 c. 19 d. 32 Ans. c

Muthuswamy Dikshitar followed a different scheme. What was hEmavati called in the scheme?

a. dEshi simhAravam

b. dhuni bhinna ShaDjam

c. sumadyuti

d. gEya hEjjajji

Ans. a

A Trio that Popularised Dasara Padagalu (contd.)

Not content to just listen to the devarnamas, Aiyaswamy Iyer and Lalithangi quickly learned more than two hundred of them from Narasimhadasa who was only too glad to share the treasure with them, staying in Madras for about an year for this purpose. Although not taking part formally in this process, assimilating it all was seven year old Vasantha who had inherited the family's musical inclination and talent.

Not content with learning for themselves the songs of the dasas – particularly those of Purandaradasa – Aiyaswamy Iyer and Lalithangi wished to bring out a book of Purandaradasa's compositions in Tamil, with notations, so that other musicians could learn and sing them. In fact, they did just that, with the help of Rangaramanuja Iyengar, a self-taught musicologist and vainika who, in later years distinguished himself by publishing four volumes (in Tamil) of the compositions of Tyagaraja, Dikshitar, Syama Sastry, and some lesser-known composers, with notations.

Recalling how her parents and Iyengar collaborated on the effort, Vasanthakumari used to recall that, "Iyengar was teaching at a school then. Every evening my parents and I used to stuff ourselves into a rickshaw and go to his residence which was some distance from ours.

The trip used to cost a rupee and a half. My mother would sing the dasar-padas, and Iyengar would take them down precisely in musical notation. This went on for more than eighteen months."

This was an effort that drew from other musicians not appreciation, but derision. Aiyaswamy Iyer's colleagues in the profession scoffed, "Why is he bothering himself with these bhajana songs?" But the Aiyars were keen on propagating Purandaradasa's compositions which they found to be things of beauty, and Iyengar who, by then, had already published a book of compositions by Papanasam Sivan, was an enthusiastic collaborator not daunted by difficulties.

One of these composers was a disciple of Patnam Subramanya Iyer. Identify him.

- a. Mysore Vasudevachar*
- b. Papanasam Sivan*
- c. Nilakanta Sivan*
- d. Jayachamaraja Wodeyar*

Ans: a

In which town did Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan and Patnam Subramanya Iyer live as neighbours?

- a. Tanjavur*
- b. Tiruvarur*
- c. Tiruchi*
- d. Tiruvayyaru*

Ans: d

A Trio that Popularised Dasara Padagalu (contd.)

One such difficulty was raising enough money to print the book. While Iyengar collected donations from the music fraternity and its patrons, Aiyaswamy Iyer sold a small patch of land he had in his native village of Koothanur, and together they managed to find enough money to print 1,000 copies of the book on paper supplied free of cost by K. Srinivasan, the famous editor of The Hindu. Published in 1941, the book was an instant success and helped to spread the glory of Purandaradasa in Tamilnadu.

A smaller edition in Telugu and Sanskrit followed in 1948, printed without cost by Rukmini Devi at her Vasantha Press. And in 1955, yet another volume was brought out, as a result of collaboration between MLV and T.K.Govinda Rao, a disciple of Musiri Subramania Iyer. MLV would recall that, "Sri Govinda Rao notated the songs perfectly. My guru, GNB, also took a great deal of interest in devarnamas and popularised songs like Jaya Jaya in Nata, Dharma Sravana in Durga, and Yaare Rangana in Hindolam."

Subsequently, over the years, MLV played the lead role in popularising the compositions of Purandaradasa which she considered to be her family's musical wealth. In the process, she delighted her audiences with enchanting renderings of the great dasa's devarnamas and ugaboghas. Today, if many others are singing the musical offerings of the dasas to Lord Krishna in formal concerts, credit belongs to the twentieth century dasas of the Dasa who was born 500 years ago: Narasimhadasa, Aiyaswamy Iyer, Lalithangi, Rangaramanuja Iyengar, Vasanthakumari, Govinda Rao... We are indebted to them all.

The Tyagaraja Hridayam is one of the earliest and most exhaustive printed compilations of Tyagaraja kritis. Who was responsible for it?

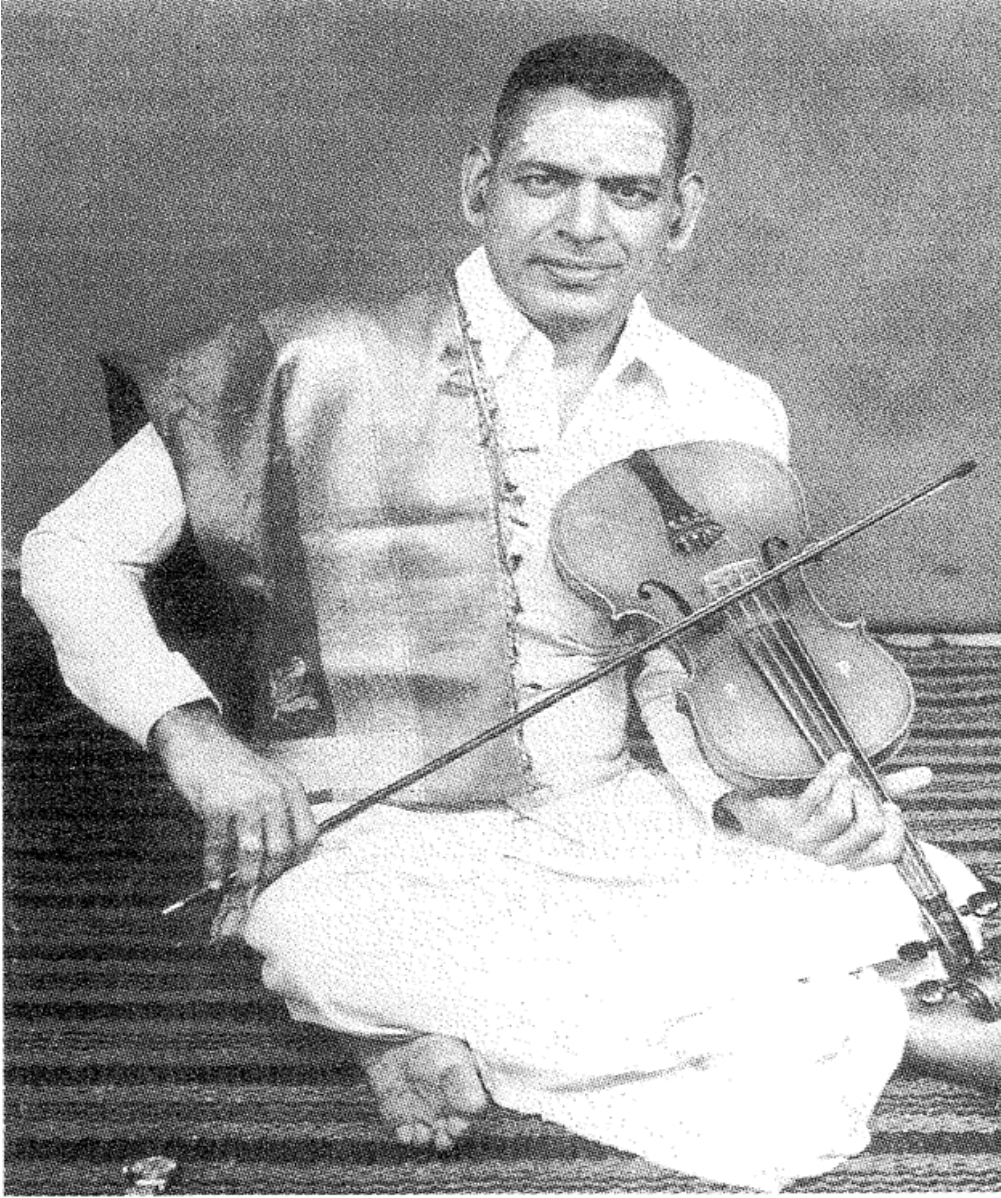
Ans. K.V.Srinivasa Iyengar

Other than Srirangam, Tiruvottiyur, Kovvur and Tiruvaiyyaru, where else did Tyagaraja compose pancaratna kritis?

Ans. Lalgudi

The kriti O rangasAyl gives us an idea about the day that Tyagaraja visited Srirangam. What day was it?

Ans. Vaikuntha Ekadashi



*In respectful memory of
Violin Vaadya Chakravarti*

Parur Sri M S Gopalakrishnan
1931 - 2013

"Naa Bhootho, Naa Bhavishyathi"

Violin Mastery in the Western Classical Tradition

By Frederick H. Martens

The techniques of violin play and efforts at mastering the instrument are not too different between Western Classical and Carnatic music, as revealed by the following excerpts from interviews with masters.

Jacques Thibaud

Bowing makes up approximately eighty percent of the sum total of violinistic difficulties ... a violinist's natural manner of playing is the one he should cultivate; since it is individual, it really represents him....I do not think that everybody plays to the best advantage on a Stradivarius...there are natural Stradivarius players and there are natural Guarnerius players ... certain artistes do their best on the one, and certain others with the other ... and I also believe that any one who is equally "good " in both is good in neither.

Theodore Spiering

The large mass of students learns merely by imitation, and invariably retrograde the moment they are no longer under the teacher's supervision ... this prevents them from deriving true benefit from their studies ... the conventional manner of teaching focuses inordinately on mechanical exercises in order to overcome so-called "technical difficulties" ... Mental preparedness (which Marcus Aurelius called as "the good ordering of the mind") is the keynote of technical control ... the application of new technical ideas is easier when the music itself is familiar to the student.

Albert Spalding

To me, violin mastery means effortless mastery of details; the correlating of them into a perfect whole; subjecting them to the expression of musical architecture. It means technical mastery in every sense of the word. It means a facility which enables the interpreter to express in a language that will seem clear, simple, and eloquent, that which in the hands of others appears difficult, obtuse, and dull The most important mental process in the development of an artiste is inculcating a perception of beauty one's greatest difficulties may turn out to be one's greatest aids in striving towards artistic results ... Concerts have great value in developing the student technically and mentally, but too often they have a directly contrary effect ... the indiscriminate attending of concerts, to my mind, has an absolutely pernicious effect on the student.

Edmund Severn

"Mastery of the violin" and "Violin Mastery" are not synonymous. "Violin Mastery" is not merely a cold, though flawless technique, but its living, glowing product when used to express the emotions suggested by

Violin Mastery in the Western Classical Tradition (contd.)

the music of the masters. But he whose goal is music with its thousand-hued beauties, with its call for the exertion of human and spiritual emotion, sets forth on a journey without end. This is the only journey worth taking with the violin as a travelling companion.

Fritz Kreisler

... I do not believe that any artist is truly a master of his instrument unless his control of it is an integral part of a whole. "Violin Mastery" falls short of perfection ... if the artist thinks only of the instrument he plays. After all, it is just a single medium of expression. The true musician is an artist with a special instrument. Every real artist has a feeling for other forms and mediums of expression if he is truly a master of his own ... If one is destined to become an artist, the technical means find themselves.

Jascha Heifetz

I have never believed in practising too much – it is just as bad as practising too little ... If one has to work very hard to get his piece, it will show in the execution. To interpret music properly, it is necessary to eliminate mechanical difficulty; the audience should not feel the struggle of the artist with what are considered hard passages ... I hardly ever practise more than three hours a day on an average. To me, violin mastery means the ability to make the violin a perfectly controlled instrument guided by the skill and intelligence of the artist, to compel it to respond to his every wish.... The artist must always be superior to his instrument, it must be his servant, one that he can do with what he will. It appears to me mastery of the technique of the violin is not so much of a mechanical accomplishment as it is of mental nature An artist will never become great through mere imitation and never will he be able to attain the best results only by methods adopted by others ... You can make a musician but not an artist !

Arthur Hartmann

Violin playing is really no abstract mystery ... it means having the right finger on the right place at the right time, but do not forget that to be able to do this, you must have forgotten to think of your fingers as fingers. They should be simply unconscious slaves of the artist's psychic expression, absolutely subservient to his ideal. Too many people reverse the process and become slaves to their fingers ... The violin was made to suit the hand, not the hand to suit the violin, hence its technique must be based on a natural logic of hand movement.

BRAIN GAMES !

Designed by Namrata Pulapaka

MUMBO JUMBO

UNSCRAMBLE THE TYĀGARĀJA KRITI NAMES. DO YOU KNOW THEIR RAGAS TOO? e.g. AMMATSI MAMĀYMA = SĪTAMMA MĀYAMMA

Note: the first letters of each kriti put together spell TYĀGARĀJA.

CLUE:

ANSWER:

ETLIRAYULĒ ARMĀ

T

ANŌCHYA LAMAKA

Y

ĀAD DIMŌ LADEGA

Ā

MĀNGARŪTĒ

G

PMAANAU NBAMGHUID

A

AĀRG HUSDĀ SARA

R

EVĀAGIRPMA

Ā

ANĀNJ SAMORĀDĀGA

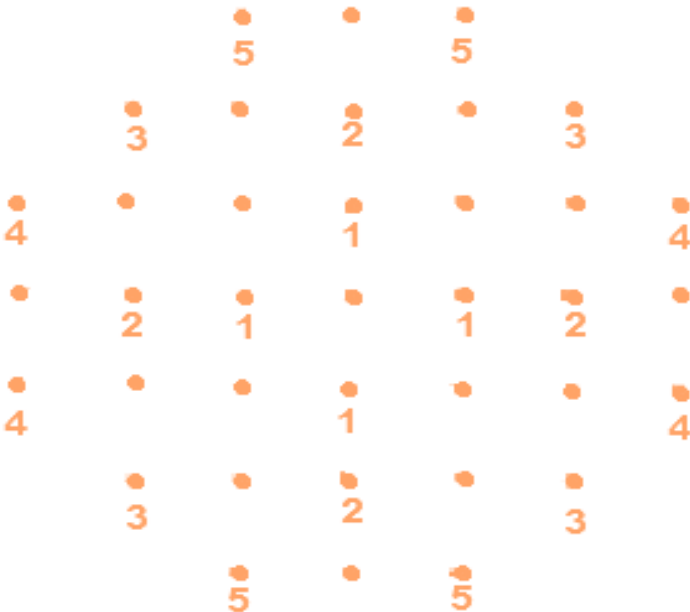
J

GAIDĪ KUHSAMU

A

KOLAM KORNER

Connect all the dots of the same number:



WHO AM I ? (RAMAYANA EDITION)

I once saved my brother Jaṭāyu the vulture from flying too close to the sun—and my wings burned instead. I helped the vanaras in the search for Sīta.

I am _____

I have magical powers. I am the son of the 10-headed king. I once defeated Lakshmaṇa through trickery but he defeated me in the end.

I am _____

I was married on the same day as my sister, but unlike her I could not join my husband in the forest. Legend has it that I slept for 14 years so that he wouldn't need to, and could fulfil his duty to his brother with full vigilance.

I am _____

I am a great devotee of Lord Shiva. I am proficient at music and even created the Rudra veena. I am also very strong and ...don't always do the right thing ...

I am _____

I sheltered Sīta in my āshram when she was abandoned in the forest. I am the guru of Lava and Kusha.

I am _____

I discovered later in life that I could grow as large or shrink as small as I wanted. I have battled many monsters and can even fly. I hold Sri Rāma in my heart.

I am _____

I took care of Ayōdhya for 14 years while its rightful king was away. I placed his sandals on the throne as his token.

I am _____

ANSWERS:

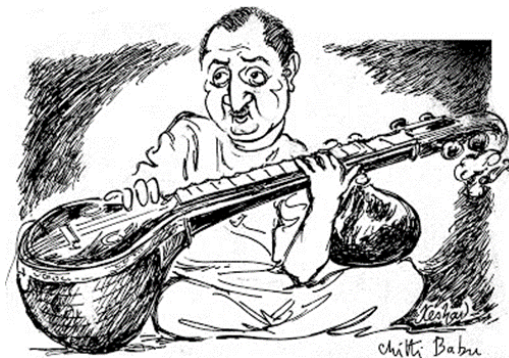
MUMBO JUMBO teliyālēru rāma—dhēnuka, yōchana kamala—darbā, āda mōdi galade—chārūkēśi, gānamūrte—gānamūrte, anupama guṇāmbudhi—atāna, rāga sudha rasa—āndōlika, āragimpave—tōḍi, jñāna mosagarāda—pūrvi kalyāṇi, adigī sukhamu—madhyamāvati.

WHO AM I Sampatī, Indrajit/Meghananda, Urmila, Ravana, Valmiki, Hanuman, Bharata.

Caricatures of Carnatic Musicians

Keshav Venkatraman

Special thanks to Sri.Keshav Venkatraman (Keshav, a well-known cartoonist, The Hindu) for kindly permitting us to use his caricatures of Carnatic musicians in our souvenir.





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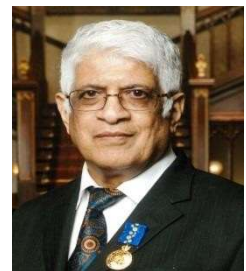
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