SRUTI RANJANI
March 1995

Thyagaraja Aradhana
Souvenir

SRUTI
The India Music and Dance Society
Phialdelphia, PA.
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Thyagaraja Aradhana Souvenir

SAINT TYÄGARÄJA DHYÄNA ŚLÖKAṂ

त्यागराज स्तुति:

प्रासो नैगमच्छया मृडुगिरा वल्लीकि जन्मो मुनि:
वैराग्ये शुक एव भक्तिविषये प्रहळाद एव स्वयम्。

ब्रह्मा नारद एव चाप्रतिमयोः सद्दीत साहित्ययोः:
यो नामामुत पान निर्जित शिवः तं त्यागराजं भजे।

Vyāsō Naigama Carcayā Mrḍugirā Valmiki Jánmō Munih
Vairāgyē Śuka ēva bhakti viṣayē Prahālāda ēva svayam ā
Brahmā Nārada ēva cāpartimayōḥ saṅgīta sāhityayōḥ
Yo Nāmāmṛta pāna nirjīta Śival taim Tyāgarājaṁ Bhajē ā

Saint Vyāsa accomplished it (the supreme bliss) through Vedic discussions; Saint Valmiki through soft words of poetry; Saint Śuka through renunciation; Prahālada through intense devotion; Brahma and Nārada through music and literature. I salute Saint Tyāgarāja, who achieved the supreme by merely drinking the immortal ambrosia of Lord’s sacred Nāma.

SRUTI
The India Music and Dance Society
Phialdelphia, PA.
EDITORIAL

SRUTI, the India Music and Dance Society of the Greater Delaware Valley, is happy to present to you this issue of SRUTI RANJANI. It is dedicated to the Thyagaraja Aradhana musical event, which is organized by SRUTI, annually, at the Berlin Temple, Berlin NJ. This particular issue differs from previous Thyagaraja Aradhana Souvenirs and SRUTI RANJANI's in more than one aspect, which hopefully reflects trend setting changes.

First, we have relaxed the restriction that articles be limited to Thyagaraja alone. As such you will find, in addition to articles on Thyagaraja, articles on topics such as Comparison between Carnatic and Hindusthani music, A Biography of MD Ramanathan etc. We believe that you will find this wide selection refreshing and enjoyable.

Second, you will notice that with this issue, SRUTI RANJANI has become a truly international publication! We are referring to the fact that some of the articles in this issue were submitted by patrons around the globe literally - one from the West Coast, another from Canada and yet another from Australia!! We hope this trend will continue for future SRUTI RANJANI issues as well.

Third, this issue includes critical and appreciative reviews of (most of the) music and dance concerts that SRUTI arranged during 1994. We hope that these reviews will provide valuable introspection into what SRUTI has done over the year and how the organization and membership have fared in delivering and nurturing the cultural enrichment that SRUTI is committed for. We would like to stress that the opinions expressed in the reviews belong entirely to the respective authors and do not represent the views of SRUTI as an organization.

Finally, SRUTI enthusiastically offers an innovative series of cassette tapes, entitled "Eka-Raga Tapes". These tapes contain musical renderings of a chosen raga, carefully selected and arranged from the past SRUTI concerts. We have produced tapes devoted to Kalyani, Mohanam, Thodi, Hindolam, Varali and Madhyamavathi and are offering them for the first time at this Thyagaraja Aradhana. We hope that, depending upon the individual's interest, SRUTI patrons will be able to use these cassettes for listening pleasure or learning purposes. Included in this issue is an article providing an analytical appreciation of the Kalyani raga cassettes. We request and encourage interested and knowledgeable SRUTI patrons to provide similar reviews of the other (and even Kalyani too) raga offerings.

We would now like to briefly scan the issue. As per the tradition, we begin the publication with the Ghana Raga Pancha Rathna Kritis. This is followed by three articles devoted to Thyagaraja, contributed by Dr. P.P. Narayanaswami (Canada), Prabhakar Chitrapur and Pratima Adipudi. Next, Frank Fregale provides an insight into how a Western mind looks at and enjoys Indian Classical Music. This is followed by a very informative article on the legendary M.D. Ramanathan by Mohan Ayyar (Australia). The next article compares and contrasts Carnatic and Hindusthani musics and is jointly authored by Immaneni Ashok and Umesh Mokate (Washington State, USA). SRUTI staff provide an appreciative analysis on Kalyani raga, based on SRUTI Eka-Raga tapes. This is followed by a review of (most of) the 1994 SRUTI concerts and the publication ends with a listing of SRUTI tapes (along with a description of their contents) available for sale.

The editors of this issue of SRUTI RANJANI express their sincere thanks to all the authors for their contributions. We also thank the SRUTI patrons for advertising in this souvenir.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and that you will provide useful feedback - positive or negative!

Prabhakar Chitrapur  Uma Prabhakar  Sundar Subramaniam
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

On this ninth annual celebration of the great composer Sri Thyagaraja's invaluable contribution to Carnatic music, SRUTI once again recognizes the crucial need for community based involvement in the preservation of our cultural heritage. Through the course of the year, we invite many accomplished and well-known artistes to perform in our area, but the Thyagaraja Aradhana remains a special event, because it focuses the limelight on our stars from the tristate area, the young children who take such tremendous effort to learn and study the musical traditions of our heritage. This event also has a different tone from the other formal concerts: the warmth, the comradery, the formation of new friendships, the food, the discovery of local talents, all add up to make it an occasion to look forward to every year. I am convinced that the more opportunities we provide for the participation of the second generation and the more often we provide platforms for local artistes, the more we will be serving the propagation of Indian culture.

In that spirit, we featured two local artists last year: the dance performance by Philadelphia resident Ramaa Ramesh, a teacher to many area children and another concert, also a dance performance, by Vidya Shridhar from California. They exemplify 'non-resident' artistes committed to the maintenence of the classical Indian Arts abroad while also serving as inspirational role models for our young generation.

Another SRUTI first occurred in 1994: Sri Chitti Babu's veena concert was cosponsored with the Telugu association of the Greater Delaware Valley, a collaboration which proved to be successful and refreshing. Community organizations working together to promote some common interests may be a great way to foster good relations and to everyone's financial well being. During 1994 the managing committee organized ten concerts (a record breaker!) and most of them reflected exceptional talent. However, the attendance at these concerts remains an issue of great concern to us. While the sudden sprouting of various smaller organizations sponsoring the same artistes bears an impact, we feel that SRUTI has a membership which is loyal and which recognizes the dedication of the organizers. Our members tell us we offer the most reasonable ticket prices and in order to experiment with that a little further, we will introduce even lower prices for the first two concerts this season. We want to know if it makes a substantial change in the attendance.

The artistes we are planning to feature this year represent the youth upsurge in Carnatic music. Nurtured by the great artistes of the tradition, this generation brings to bear the best of the past with its own brand of creativity. P. Unnikrishnan, the Hyderabad Brothers, and Sanjay Subramaniam are three leaders of the youth renaissance who will be performing for the SRUTI audience in the upcoming season. On the dance front, we will bring 'Banyan Tree', a production of the CCA of 'Jaya Jaya Devi' fame. Each of these concerts will be memorable and inspiring and you don't want to miss them!

As you know, SRUTI is a non-profit organization operated by volunteers and I am proud to say that the managing committee consists of unassuming dedicated people who sincerely subscribe to the promotion of SRUTI's mission. This committee has witnessed some significant changes in the overall scene of promoting classical music and dance. The expenses involved in organizing concerts continue to escalate as do the prices being charged by the sponsors. If we want to continue bringing reputed artists to this area, there must be an immediate change of attitude on everyone's part. We must take pride in featuring great artistes in our area so that OUR children may take advantage of the richest classical Indian arts, and just as importantly, so we can add to the cultural mosaic of OUR local community by increasing the awareness of Indian culture.

I hope you enjoy the Thyagaraja Aradhana and continue to support this managing committee in its endeavors. Thank you for your patronage.

Sincerely
Renuka Adiraju

Managing Committee

President: Renuka Adiraju
Corresponding Secretary: Ranga Sudhakara
Treasurer: Ramana Kanumalla

Vice President: P. Narayanan
Recording Secretary: S.G. Ramanathan
Members-at-large: Sundar Subramaniam & Prabhakar Chitravu
Sri Kakarla Thyagaraja
Thyagaraja’s Birthplace

Thyagaraja’s Samadhi
GHANA RÀGA PANCHARATHNA KIRTANAS

1. Nàta Ràga - Ádi Thàla

Jagada+ananda-kàraka Jaya Jánaki Prâna-nàyaka
1. Gagana+adhîpa Satkulàja Ràja Ràjeswara Sugunàkara Sura-sèvya Bhavya-dàyaka Sada Sakala
2. Amàrâ-thàrâka Nichaya-kumuda-hitha Pàrî-pùrña+anagha Sura Sura-bhûja Dadhi-payòdh-vàsa Harana
Sundara-thàra Vadamàna Sudhà-maya Vachò-brunda Gòvinda Sànanda Màvara+ajaràpta Subhakàra+anèka
3. Nígama Nírâja+amruta Poshaka+animisha-vairi Vârîda Samîrâna Khaga-thuranga Satkâi Hrudâlaya Agânitha
Vànara+adhîpa Nathàmghri Yuga
4. Indra-nilà-manî Sannîbhàpa-ghana Chandra Sûrya-nayana+apramèya Vâgînîr Janaka Sakalèsa Subhra Nàgèndrà-
sayana Samâna-vairi Sannuta
5. Pàda Vîjîtha Mauni-sàpa Sava Paripàla Vara-mantra Grahana Lòla Parama Sàntha-chittha Janakàja+adhipa Saròjà-
bhava Varada+akhila
Surasâripu Karâbja
7. Lâlitacharana Avaguna Suragana Mada-harana Sanâtanâ-janutha
8. Om-kâra Panjara-kîra Puraharma Saròjabhava Kèsava+adî Rûpa Vâsava-ripu Janakànthaka Kalâ-dharàpta Ghrunàkàra
Saranàgatha Janapàlana Sumanò-ramana Nirvikàra Nígama-sàra-thàra
Thyàgaràja Sannutha
Avíkruta Thyàgaràja Sannutha
11. Agânitha-guna Kanaka-chèlâ Sàlavidalana Arunàbha Samâna-charana Apàra Mahîma+adbhutha Sukavîjana Hrut-
sadana Sura-muni-gana Vîhîta Kalasa Nîrânidhîjà-ramana Pàpa Gaja Nrûsimha Thyàgaràja+adî-nutha

******************************************************************************

2. Gowla Ràga - Ádi Thàla

Dudukà-gala Nannè Dora-koduku Bròchurà Enthò
1. Kadu Durvishaya-krushtdai Gadiya Gadiyaku Nindâru
2. Sri Vanîtha Hruthkumudabja Avàng-mànasa Gòchara
3. Sakala Bhûthamula-yandu Nîvai-yundagà Madi-lèka-bòyina
4. Chîruta-prayamula-nàdè Bhajanàmruta Rasavihîna Kutaarkudaina
5. Paradhanamula-koraku Norula Madi-karaga-balki Kadupu- nimpa Thîrigi-natti
6. Thana-madini Bhuvini Sankhyapu Jivanamè Yanuchu Sadà Dinamulu Gadipè
7. ठेल्यांनी नाता-विटा-क्षुद्रुल वनिताळु सवासांमुता कुपसिंती संतासी स्वारा-लयांभु लरुंगकानु
सिलाठमुलाय सुभाक्षुदुलूकु समानानानु
8. दृष्टिकोटी सारंबागुलाळानी सांदरबंघकू सेनामती धनादंलुना, देवादी-देवा नेना नंमीथिगाकानु, नी
Pादाबी-भाजानबुमबु मराचिना
9. चाककानी मुखा कमलांबुनु सदा नाथ मदीलो समाना लेकाने द्वराकांदनांहा जाणु खोरी पारी दापामुलचे
दागिली नोगिली दुर्विशया दुरासालानु रोयालेका सत्राथामा पारदेस्तानीयाचा चपालचित्तूदनानान्या
10. मानवातनु दुरालाबा-मन्चु नेंच तमानानंदे-मोळ-लेका; मादा मत्सरा कामा लोधा मोहुलकू दासुदाई
मोसाबोटी गाका; मोदाती-कुलाजुटुगुचु भुवुही सुद्रुपाली पुंसलानु नुंतनी गाका; नारादामुलानु रोया रासा
विहनमयीनानु साधिंपा ठारुमु।
11. साठुलकू कोणालश्चिकाती स्थुलकू कोणालु धनाठाठुलक्षाती थिरीगिथिनयाया ठ्यागराज्याप्ताती इतुवाणी

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3. अरब्री रा॒गा - अदी ठाळा

स्त्रेंत्सनेमु ओ मासाना
1. बोधिनिचिना समामर्गा-वचानामुला बोंकु चेसी ठारा-पट्तिनित्तु
2. समायाणीकी ठागु मात्तीलेने
3. देवाकी वसुदेवुला नेझिनिचिनतु
4. रंगेशुदु सधंगाजी जानकुदु संगिथासी साम्राज्यायकुदु
5. गोपी-मनोरास्का मोसानग्रा-लेकाने गेयु चेसी-वादु
6. वानिधाला सदा सोक्का जीयदुनु मुरक्का चेसी परामात्मु-दाद्धेयु-गाका यासोढा ठानायुंदानु
मुड्हांबुनानु मुड्हु-बेट्ता नेवुचुंदुनु हरी
7. परामा भक्त्हा वातालुला सुगुना पारवांदुरु आजूनमं-आंघुडी काली बाठहाला ठिरचु वादाचुनने-ः
hrudayambujamuna जुचुंहुंदागा
8. हरे रामचंद्राद्र राघुकुलेशा म्रुदुभाशा सेशसायाना पराणारी सोधराज जविराज ठुरंगा राजराजा विनुथा
निरामयापांगाना सारसीरुहा याणुहु वेदुक्कनना ठारा ब्रोवकानु
9. स्री वेनकेत्सा सुप्रकाशा सर्वोत्तमाना साजीनांमासा निकेल्ना कंकामंदाराहा लसांनकुटाकुंडाला विराधिथा
हरे याणुहु ने पोगाडाजा ठ्यागराज-गेयुदु मानवेंदुर्दादीया रामाचंद्रुदु
10. समायाणीकी ठागु मात्तीलेने; साठ्यभक्तिला नादाथा लिटलेने अमारिकागा नाय; पूजा-कोनेने अलगवाद्हिनणेने;
विमूखलाठी जेदबू-मानेने; वेठा गाल्गिना ठालुक्मूनम्नेने; दामसा मादी सुकादायुकुदु स्री
ठ्यागराजानुथुदुसे चेन्तहा राकाने

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4. Varāli Rāga - Ādi Thāla

Kana Kana Ruchirā Kanakavasana Ninnu
1. Dina Dinamunu Manasuna Chanavuna Ninnu
2. Pālugarū Mōmuna Sri Yapāra Mahīma Danaru Ninnu
3. Kala Kala-manu Mukha-kala Galigina Sītha Kulukuchu Ora-kannulachē Ninnu
4. Bālārkābhasu Chēla Manimaya Mālālamkrutha Kamdhara Sarasijāksha Varaka Pōla Suruchira Kiritadhara
   Sathathambu Manasārāga
5. Sāpathnīmāthayow Suruchichē-karna Sūlamaina-māta Vinula Chuirukkana Thālaka Śri Harini Dhyānimichi
   Sukhimpaga-lēda Yatu
6. Mrugamadalalāma Subhanitala Varajatāyu Mōkshaphalada Pavanamānasutudu Nidhu Mahima Delpa Sīta Thelisi
   Valachi Sokkalēdarithi Ninnu
7. Sukhāspada Vimukhambudhara Pavanā Vidēhāmanasā Viharāptha Surabhūja Mānitha Gunāmka Chidānanda Khaga
   Thuranga Dhruaratadhāṅga Parama Dayākara Karunārasa Varunālaya Bhayāpahārā Śri Raghupathē
8. Kāminchi Prēmamira Karamu Nidu Pādakamalamula Battukonuvadu Sākshi Rāmanāma Rasikudu Kaiāsā
   Sadhanudu Sākshi Marīyu Nārada Parāsara Suka Saunaka Purandara Nagajā Dharaṇa Mukhyulu Sākshigāda
   Sundarēsa Sukha Kalambudhi Vāsārithulakē
9. Sathathamu Prēma Purūthadugu Thyāgarāja nутa mukhajitha Kumudahitha Varada Ninnu

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5. Sri Rāga - Ādi Thāla

Endarō Mahānubhāvulu+Andariki Vandanamul+endarō
1. Chanduru Varnuni Anda-chandamunu Hrudaya+ aravindamunu Jūchi Brahma+ananda+manubhavinchu Vār+endarō
2. Sāma-gāna-lōla Manasija-lāvanya Dhanya-mūrdhanyul+ endarō
3. Mānasa Vana-chara VARA Sanchāramu Nilipi Mūrthī Bāguga Podaganē Vār+endarō
4. Saraguna Pādamulaku Svāntamanu Sarbjamamu Samarpanamu Sēyuvār+endarō
5. Pathitha Pāvanudanē Parāṭhparuni Gurinchī Paramārdhamagū Nīja-mārgamuthonu Pāduchunu Sallāpamuthō Swara-
   laya+ādi Rāgamul Teliyu Vār+endarō
6. Hari-guna Manulagū Saramulu Galamunā Sōbhillu Bhaktha-kotul+ilalō Thēlivito Chelinitō Karuna+kalgi
   Jagamellanu Sudhā-drushichē Brōchu Vār+endarō
   Mudambanunu Yasamu Gala Vār+endarō
8. Parama Bhàgavatha Mauni-vara Sasivibhakara Sanaka-sanandana Digisa Sura Kimpurusha Kanakasipu-suta Nàrada
Thumburu Pavana-sùnu Bàlachandra-dhara Suka-saròja-bhava Bhù-sura-varulu Parama-pàvanulu Ghanulu
Sàsvathulu Kamala-bhava-sukhamu Sada+anubhavulu Gàka Endarò
Raghuvara! Nî Yeda Sàdbhakthiyu Janinchakanu Durmathamulanu Kalla Chèsinatti Nî Madi Neringi
Samrathambununu Guna-bhajana+ananda Kirtanamu Sèyu Vàr+endarò
Muppadi Mukkòti Sura+antharangamula Bhàvamula Neringi Bhàva-ràga Laya+adi Saukhyamulache
Chira+ayuvul+kaligi Nirapadhi Sukha+atmulai Thyàgaràja+aptulaina Vàr+endarò

A word about the Script:

As you know, the alphabets of Telugu and Sanskrit contain letters, that do not have a counterpart in the Roman alphabet. Thus I have used the following scheme to denote the extra letters in Telugu. 1) ş as in sura, 2) ś' as in śiva, 3) n as in nar, 4) ṅ as in Gañapati, 5) r as in rama, 6) r' as in r'ushi, 7) l as in kalyani, 8) l' as in varaal'i, 9) t as in náta, 10) th as in Thyàgaràja.

Furthermore, it is important to clearly distinguish long and short vowels. I have consistently used an accent above the letter to indicate long sounds.

Finally, in Telugu, elementary words are often combined to form composite words, through a process called "Sandhi". During this process, a transformation occurs at the junction of the two words, sometimes making it difficult to understand or even pronounce the long composite words. In such cases, I have separated the words by a plus (+) sign. For example, gaganaadhipa is written as gagana+adhipa.
KŚETRA KRTIS OF SAINT TYĀGARĀJA

P. P. Narayanaswami (Canada)

Of the 705 or so kṛtis of Saint Tyāgarāja that are currently in vogue, a major bulk is devoted to singing the Glory of Lord Śri Rāma through the medium of Nāma Japa and Bhakti. Several Harikathā exponents have conducted Rāmâyana Kathā Praśaṅgains employing solely his compositions, to illustrate the essence of this epic story, since there is a wealth of Rāma Nāma Mahīma scattered through his songs. Though he was an advocate of Rāma Nāma Tāraka Maṇtra, Tyāgarāja has taken time out to deviate from this theme, to compose several beautiful kṛtis in praise of other Gods and Goddesses of the South Indian Hindu Pantheon. Unlike Muttsuvāmi Dikṣītar, he was not a zealous pilgrim, but he had travelled to some nearby shrines in places like Śrīraṅgaṁ, Lālgudi (near Trichy), Tirupati, Kovur, Tiruvoorṭuṛur, Nāgaṭṭaṇṭam, Madras, to mention a few places. Also, besides Lord Rāma, he has composed and sang in praise of Lord Gaṇeśa, Lord Śiva, Lord Viṣṇu, Goddess Pārvati (in several forms), and the sacred river Kāveri, in addition to a large number of songs glorifying Nāḍabrahmaṁ, the medium of Sapta Svara through which he expressed his feelings toward God. In this small note, I shall try to point out the various Tyāgarāja kṛtis that are not related to the theme of Rāma Brahmacāṁ.

On Lord Gaṇeśa, Tyāgarāja sang the kṛti “Girirāja sutā tanayā nadaya” in the Rāgāṁ Baṅgaḷa. This composition is in simple Sanskrit, and there are numerous compositions of Tyāgarāja in Sanskrit. Another kṛti on Gaṇeśa, again in Sanskrit, “Śrī Gaṇanātham Bhajāmyahan” in the Rāgāṁ Kanakaṁ is attributed to Tyāgarāja, but strangely, it includes the mudra (signature) of Tyāgarāja, as well as Muttsuvāmi Dikṣītar (in the phrase “Gurugaha”), but the style resembles very much that of Dikṣītar.

In the kṛti “Śaṟi Vedalinā” in Rāgāṁ Asāvēri, Tyāgarāja describes the flow of the sacred river Kāveri – the river, which gloriously going towards her husband’s house, fulfilling the desires of all devotees, and after seeing Lord Śri Raṅganātha, comes to Paṅcanadīśvara, who is the life of the fourteen lōkas. In the Mukhāṁ rāga piece, “Muripēmu galigegadā”, he further echoes: “Oh Rāma! are you not happy that you have secured the abode of Paṅcananda Kṣetra in Coḷa Deśāṁ, a place so beautiful, and worthy of being coveted by Lord Śiva himself, situated on the banks of the holy river Kāverī. . . . .”.

Since Tyāgarāja spent a major portion of his time in the temple city of Tiruvaṭṭyur (Paṅcanadi – the bank of five rivers), we find a number of compositions dedicated to the presiding deity of the temple at Tiruvaṭṭyur, Lord Praṇatārthiḥihaṁ (Śiva), and the Divine consort Goddess Dharmasainavardhāṁ. The following kṛtis are all composed at this sacred place.

Kṛtis on Paṅcanadīśaṁ
Ilḷalō Praṇatārtthihara Aṭhāṇāṁ
Evaṇaḷārūr Māḷavaśīri
Ēhi Trijaṭagadīsa Śaṇāṅga
Muccaṭa Brahmacāṁ Madhyamāvati
Darsanaṭu Sēya Nārāyanagāḷa
Śīva Śīva yena Paṇṭuvārāḷi
Dēvādē vaṇ Sadaśīva Sindurāmakriya

Kṛtis on Dharmaṃsaṁvārdhāṁ
Karaṇajūṭavanmā Tōdi
Parasakṭi Manuparadā Śāvēri
Nīvī braṇavafē Śāvēri
Bāḷe Baḷēndu Rītigauḷa
Ammā Dharmaṃsaṁvārdhāṁ Athāṇaṁ
Vidhi Śaṅkraṇḍalukā Yamunākalyāṇaṁ
Śīvē Pāhīmāṁ Kalyāṇaṁ
Bāḷe Baḷēndu Rītigauḷa
Inṇāḷavā Dēṣāya Tōdi
Nanu Kanna Tallī Kēsari
Amba Ninnu Nammitī Āraḥhi

At the request of Saint Upanisad Brahmacāṁ, a head of the Mathāṁ, and a close friend of his father, Tyāgarāja visited the ancient city of Kānçīpuram, renowned for its numerous Śiva and Viṣṇu temples. Two kṛtis on Lord Varadārāja, in the rare rāgāins Rīgapaṇicāmāṁ and Svarabhuṣaṇaṁ, and one in Madhyamāvati on Goddess Kāṁkṣi are available to us.

Kṛtis on Varadārājasvāṁ
Varada Navaṇitāśa Rāgapaṇicāmāṁ
Varadārāja Ninnukōri Svarabhuṣaṇaṁ

Kṛti on Kāṇci Kāṁkṣi
Vināyakuni valu Madhyamāvati

Viṇa Kuppaṇgar was a prominent disciple of Tyāgarāja, and at his request, Tyāgarāja visited the town of Tiruvaṭṭyur (also known as Asīpurāṁ). Here he composed five beautiful kṛtis on Goddess Tripurasundari, known as Tiruvottiyur Paṅcaratnam. The last one in this series, in the Rāgāṁ Sudhāsāvēri, is a very popular song, often rendered in concerts.

Tiruvottiyur Paṅcaratnam
Kanna Tallī Śāvēri
Sundari Ninnu Āraḥhi
Sundari Nannindarilō Bēgadā
Sundari Nī Divya Kalyāṇaṁ
Dharinī Telusukonti Śuddhāsāvēri

One Sundara Mudaliyar of Kovur, a rich Landlord, and a sincere devotee of Tyāgarāja, invited him to visit his home town and the shrine of Lord Sundarēsvara of Kovur. Here, Tyāgarāja composed five songs, which are at present known as Kovur Paṅcaratnaṁs.
KÖVÜR PAÑCARATNAÑ
I Vasudhå Sahånå
Köri sevîmpêvé Kharharapriya
Śambhô Mahâdevå Pantuvârâli
Nammî Vaccina Kalyâñî
Sundarâsvaruni Śankarâbhârañâñ

In the soul-stirring and weighty Kâmbhôjî composition, Ō Raṅgâsåyî, Tyâgarâja refers to the shrine at Śrîraṅgam as “Bhûloka Vaikunthåñ” (the heaven on earth)!

ŚRÎRAÑGAM PAÑCARATNAÑ
Jûtâ Murârê Arabhi
Ō Raṅgâsåyî Kâmbhôjî
Karuna Jûtumayyâ Sârânga
Râjuvedâla Tódî
Vinârâda Dêvâgândhârî

Tyâgarâja had several disciples from the town of Tiruttavattur, also known as Lâlgudi. At their request, he spent some time in the small town of Lâlgudi, worshipping the presiding deities, Lord Saptârîshvara (also known as Śrî Tapastîrtha Dëva), and Goddess Pravrddha Śrîmati.

While at Lâlgudi, he is believed to have stayed at house of the parents of the famous violinist Lâlgudi G. Jayaraman. (The name “Śrîmati” is often a household name for female children in this village). The five songs he composed here are known as Lâlgudi Pañcâratnañ. Recently, Lâlgudi Jayaraman and his disciples have beautifully rendered all these five kṛtis in chorus, in a one hour cassette.

LÂLGUDI PAÑCARATNAÑ
Gati Nîvê Tódî
Lalitê Śrî Bhairavi
Dëvê Śrî Madhyâmavati
Mahita Pravrddha Kâmbhôjî
Īśa Pâhi Mâm Kalyânî

The story associated with the Gâulpântu kṛti “Tera tiyagaradä” is well known. When Tyâgarâja visited the famous hill temple at Tirupati, the entrance curtain was closed, and so he spontaneously sang this kṛti, and at once, it is believed that the curtain rose, and he had holy darśanâñ. The other song associated with Tirupati temple is “Venkateshâ ninu” in Madhyâmavati Râgam.

When Tyâgarâja visited the coastal town of Nagapattânanâñ, it is conjectured that some incident might have taken place there, that caused him sorrow. This mood is reflected in the composition “Karmâmâ Balavanta Mâyå” in Sâveri. At this place, he also sang the Tódî kṛti “Evaru Teñya”.

A sequence of three compositions are attributed to the temple at Sholingapuram. The first one is on Yoga Laṅkhmi Narasimha while the second one, and third, in the rare Râgam Vasantaravarâli and Pûrânalâlî, are on Yoga Âñjanâñeya.

KRTIS ON ÂNJANÉYÀ
Narasimhâ Nannu Bilahari
Pâhi Râmâdûta Vasantavarâli
Kalugunâ Pâdanirâja Pûrânalâlî

In the town of Sîrkâzhi, Tyâgarâja sang three songs on Lord Subrahmanya: “Ni Vaññi Daivam” in Tódî, “Innâlava” in Dësya Tódî, and “Vara Śikhivåhâna” in the not so often heard Râgam Supradîpâñ.

There is supposed to be a Tyâgarâja kṛti dedicated to the Śri Parthasarathy temple of Tiruvallikeni (Triplicane, Madras), beginning with the Pallavi line “Sâri Vetalinâ”, but only the Pallavi and Anupallavi are currently available, and the Carañam is lost! There are a few other compositions, whose correct context and location cannot be determined, for want of exact geographical details.

No description of Tyâgarâja compositions will ever be complete without mentioning his numerous kṛtis on the theme of Sangita Prâsâmå, which praise the Glory of divine Music, the Nâdabrahmam: He echoes the Vedic dictum that Lord Śiva is Nâda tanu, and praises Lord Saṅkara in the Cittarañjani song “Ndâtanum Aniśam Cintayâmi!”. He describes Śrî as the essence of Sâmanvâda, who delights in the art of seven Svarâs which are born of his five faces. In the Śrî râga, “Nâmakusuma”, he asks us to place the supreme Lord on the jewelled pedestal of Nâda and Svara, and worship his feet. Mere knowledge of music without Bhakti (devotion) does not lead us to the right path, says Tyâgarâja in the Dhanyâśi kṛti “Saṅgita Jñânam”. In the Andôlika kṛti “Râgasudhârâsa Pânunâ”, Tyâgarâja suggests in the Carañam that Nâda, Svara and Prañâva are of the very form of Lord Sâdâsva. One can attain bliss of Brahm by contemplating on Nâda, according to the Kalyâpavasanta song “Ndâdoludai”. The list goes on. The following is a partial list of Tyâgarâja kṛtis devoted to the Glorification of Music.

KRTIS ON SAŃGÎTÄN (NADÀN)
Ânada Sâgarâ Garudadhvani
Mûksamu Galâdå Sârawati
Ndâdaludai Kalyd navasantam
Ndâsudhârasam Ârâbi
Ndâsudhârasa Bêgada
Svarârga Sudhâ Śankarâbhârañam
Śripriyâ Athâañâ
Saṅgîtasâstra Mukhâñi
Sogasgâ Śrâñjâni
Sôbilu Jâganmohini
Saṅgîta Jñânamu Dhanyâśi
Vidulaka Mâyâmalâvagaiulä
Varârga Cenjukâmbhôjî
Ndâtanum Cittarañjâni
Râgaratnamâlika Rîtigaulä
Ndâmakusuma Śrî
Saṅgîta Sâstrâ Sâlakahairavi
Sîtâvara Dêvâgândhârî
In conclusion, we offer our humble homage to Saint Tyāgarāja through the following majestic Śākam, composed by Walajapet Krishnaswamy (the eldest son of Walajapet Venkataramana Bhagavathar, the foremost disciple of Saint Tyāgarāja), which beautifully crystalizes the sacredness and depth of this divine composer.

Saint Vyāsa accomplished rt (the supreme bliss) through Vedic discussions; Saint Vālmiki through soft words of poetry; Saint Śūka through renunciation; Prahlāda through intense devotion; Brahma and Nārada through music and literature. I salute Saint Tyāgarāja, who achieved the supreme by merely drinking the immortal ambrosia of Lord’s sacred Nāma.

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This Is No Devotion

Prabhakar Chitrarpu

Today, Thyagaraja is classical. Those of us that like him are old-fashioned and traditional. However, when Thyagaraja lived, he was a non-conformist. He broke traditions and defined new rules. To have followed him at that time may have been treading the rebellious path - as watching MTV today is - perhaps!

In any case, Thyagaraja seems to have questioned - among other things - the entrenched ways of exhibiting "devotion". In the song "Teliyal eru Rama Bhakti Margamu", he declares that the ritualistic ways are not the path of devotion. The words employed by Thyagaraja to convey this notion deserve closer appreciation. The words, quite simply and in a snap, trivialize the time honored religious practices that society upheld in awe and high esteem. The song must have been quite an insulting blow to those that it was intended for!

Like in so many other songs of his, in "Teliyal eru Rama" Thyagaraja describes what the path of devotion is not. He gives no clue whatever to what it may be!!

Kriti:

Teliya Leru Rama Bhakti Margamu ll
Ilanathata Tiruguchu Kaluvarinchere Gani ll
Vega Lechi Nita Munigi Bhuti Pusi ll
Vellanench Veliki Slaghaniyulai ll
Baaga Paikamaarjana lollulaire ll
Gani Thyagaraja Vinutha ll

Pallavi:
Teliya Leru = Cannot know (comprehend); Rama; Bhakti Maragamu = Path of Devotion;

(They) cannot comprehend the path of devotion.

Who are they? Anupallavi gives a hint. Charanam elaborates. This structure is so typical of Thyagaraja's compositions!

Anupallavi:
Ilan + Anthata = All over the world; Tiruguchu = Roaming around; Kaluvarinchere = Blabbering as if in Sleep; Gani = But (only).

(They are) but only roaming around all over the world blabbering, as if in sleep!

I suppose that the reference here is to those 'devotees' going on pilgrimages and routinely repeating God's name.

Charanam:
Vega = Quickly (early); Lechi = Getting up (waking up); Nita = in water; Munigi = Immersing (plunging); Bhuti = Ash; Pusi = Smearing; Vellanu + Enchi = Counting fingers; Veliki = Outwardly; Slaghaniyulai = Being respected people;

Baaga = Very well; Paikamu = Money; Aarjana Lolulaire Gani = Have only become enamoured in accumulating wealth; Thyagaraja Vinutha = One praised by Thyagaraja.

(In the first two lines, Thyagaraja is mocking at those that blindly follow the ritualistic practices of) waking up early in the morning, taking a bath in a river/pond, smearing holy ash (vibhuti) on their bodies, counting their fingers in japa/meditation and commanding respect by society. Such people are only interested in accumulating wealth, O Rama!

The words that Thyagaraja used in the first two lines clearly convey the contempt he had for such blind practices. The word Bhuti is used for the holy Vibhuti found in Siva temples. Poosukonuta (smearing) is a lowly way of saying adorning. Vellanench suggests a very mechanical almost idiotic way of doing meditation! Nita muniguta again are very common place words and indicate much thoughtlessness!

Reflection:

The greatness of great people is that they reflect truths in us. By suggestion, they enable us to see within ourselves. The object ceases to be Thyagaraja, but us.

Today, Bhakti is old fashioned - few of us can seriously and without question believe in faith. What is the relevance of this song then? Simply a historical curiosity? Linguistic delight? Sensuous music? That is it? Perhaps not. The duality between Bhakti and Rituals is essentially the duality between Entity and Expression; Truth and Symbol. The entity can be love, dedication, caring, learning, wisdom... Can one sustain the entity without the expression? How important is the symbol? How should it be used? We deal with these issues every day, knowingly or otherwise. What is the answer?

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MUSIC, GOD AND SAINT THYAGARAJA

Pratima Adipudi

It is difficult to imagine Carnatic Music without Saint Thyagaraja. My brother, sister and I have been learning music from our mother for almost nine years. Several of our favorite songs are Sri Thyagaraja's compositions. My mother always explains the meaning and bhavam of a piece before teaching us the song so that we can sing with feeling. Since I also speak (!!!) and understand Telugu, I enjoy Thyagaraja Kritis a lot.

While a number of composers have included Bhakti, Sringara and other bhavas in their works, Saint Thyagaraja is unique in that he composed several songs about music itself.

In "Sobhillu Sarphaswara" in Jagannohini ragam, he describes the seven notes, their origin and urges us to worship the beautiful shapes of the seven tones; and in "Naadopasana" (Begada), he glorifies music further, picturing it as capable of sustaining even the Gods - 'Naadopasanache Sankaara Narayana vidulu velasiri oh manasaa'; and how about "Nadasudha rasambilamu" in Arabhi wherein Sri Thyagaraja maintains that Lord Rama is the human form of Nada itself: 'Swaramulaarunnokatii ghantalu, vara raagamu kodandamu'; and finally one of my favorites that literally defines a Kriti - Sogasuga mridanga taalam in Srijanani.

Sri Thyagaraja believed music to be both the medium and the message and by giving expression to this in simple terms, he brought religion, morality and bhakti maarga within the reach of the common man - songs like Swara raaga sudha rasayutha bhakti (Sankarabharanam), Chakkani raaja maargamu (Kharaharapriya) and Saamaja vara gamana (Hindola) are examples; in his own way, he propagated "oneness of God". "Hariyata harudata narulata... andarilo Paramathmudu velige" in Vaagadheeswari; "Sarvamathamulaku sammathamainatti peridi ninnu penchina vaarevare"; he condemns hypocrisy in Teliyaluru Raama (Dhenuka) and he lived by the values he wrote about -Nidhi chaala sukhamaa.

And finally, his artistry in describing personal experience is really awesome! "Giripai nelakonna Raamuni guri thappaka kanti" (Saaha) - ten days before he was to attain Moksha - tears of joy were rolling down his cheeks, it is said, "Pulakaankithudai aanandaasruruva nimpuchu". We can almost see Lord Rama on the hill ourselves.

God - Human Consciousness - Classical Indian Music

Frank M. Fragale

I still remember the first time I listened to classical Indian music. A friend of mine and myself went to a common friend's house. As we entered the house, we heard a record of Ali Akbar Khan playing. As soon as we heard the music, it established a vibration inside of me that polarized my emotions and has constantly grown to form true beauty.

This is not an accident - this is a relationship that can be put into practice by anybody who is willing to make a decision about his life. Listen to the music without a purely intellectual message. Listen with the intention to find something within yourself that will help you to listen to classical Indian music. This forms a circle.

When you sit down to listen to a music form that is designed to transmute your emotional state, and the transmutation leads you to know the musical form more, it adds a maturity to your entire emotional state. This transmutation makes us aware of our emotional nature as a separate unit - separate from other units such as the physical body, mental capacity and the spirit. Moreover, as we listen more closely, we become aware that the music follows a divine plan, that all of the physical world becomes manifest through the same divine plan.

There are changes that occur in the bodies of the artists while they are playing. The spiritual centers become active, and indeed the music is designed to activate these centers. As one Guru once said to his pupils "Sing this raga and the pain in your leg will disappear".

There is true beauty in following the complete process of classical Indian music. It will begin to have an appearance of having a life, all of its own inside of you. You know that it is your real self manifesting in your conscious mind. Indeed, then you have it: the music is an integral part of you and is your true self.

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Sri M. D. Ramanathan - a brief biography

Mohan Ayyar

1994 is the tenth anniversary after the death Sri M. D. Ramanathan. I offer this article as a sincere homage to this great musician.

His life

M. D. Ramanathan (MDR) was born in Manjapara, Palghat District, Kerala on 20 May 1923. He had his early exposure and training in music from his father, Devesa Bhagavat, who was a music teacher by trade. MDR attended Victoria College in Palghat, where he attained a B.Sc. degree majoring in Physics. He was well known in college as a talented vocalist. During this time, Ramanathan continued to progress his music studies and after completing his degree, he was taken to Madras by his father to further his musical career.

This was also the time when Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale had initiated the Sangita Siromani music course at Kalakshetra with the distinguished and respected Sri Tiger S. Varadacharir as Principal of the college. MDR auditioned for the course and was the only vocal student in the very first batch commencing in 1944.

Being the only student in the course meant that Ramanathan could receive extra special attention from Tiger Varadacharir. It is to be noted that Ramanathan is recognised as Tiger's most renowned disciple. Ramanathan held his guru in very high regard and always showed the highest respect towards him. Indeed, a special relationship between the guru and sishya developed with Tiger also recognising his sishya's talents. It has been said that MDR inherited even his guru's squint! This relationship continued for six years until the death of Sri Varadacharir.

After his graduation at Kalakshetra, MDR continued on at that institution - firstly as an assistant to his guru and later as Professor of music. He held this post, as well as being principal of the college of fine arts teaching both music theory and practice. Through his association with Kalakshetra he taught many students out of which perhaps the late Jaya Pasupathi is the best known.

Ramanathan's musical knowledge was highly respected among fellow musicians. He received the 'Padmasri' in 1974, the Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 1975 and the Indian Fine Arts Society's 'Sangita Kala Sikkhamani' title in 1976. He was a member of the Madras Music Academy's Experts Committee for many years. He was coveted for the Academy's Sangeetha Kalanidhi award in the 1983-84 season but the politics within that institution did not grant him the honour. Some have suggested that he be granted the award posthumously.

After a long illness, MDR passed away aged sixty on 27 April 1984. His death was due to heart failure. He is survived by his wife and his adopted son (MDR's sister's son), Balaji, who was about 10 at the time of MDR's death. A memorial fund was set up by a number of musicians and music lovers (including Sankara Menon, T. N. Krishnan, K. J. Yesudas and T. V. Gopalakrishnan) to assist his family after his death. There has been a film made about his life but it yet to be made commercially available. I believe there are only three pre-recorded cassettes of his available (one starts with Mahaganapathim in Nattai and the other the Kanada Ata tala varnam. The third is a double alnnum starting with Viriboni in Bharavi and has a Pallavi in Sankarbharanam). His music was heard for many years as the first item of the day on All India Radio in Madras.

M. D. Ramanathan is remembered as a gentleman and a musician's musician. His dedication to his guru, God and music was below none and his music lives on in the hearts of his admirers.

His Music

The music of M. D. Ramanathan is quite unique. There is no one who has a similar style of music, a style that has captivated the hearts of many music lovers. A colleague of MDR (D. Pasupathi) notes that Ramanathan was a nadopasaka - one who worships sound/music. He sang music for music's sake and was not bothered by a lack of audience or criticism of his style. He also sang for his own satisfaction. His style was in striking contrast to many of his contemporaries and offered peaceful music rich with bhava.

Ramanathan's music was sober, serene and soothing. There was prasanthi in his recitals. His slow rendering not only gave him time for introspective exploration, but also provided the audience with the opportunity to receive the message and ponder over it. The atmosphere he created during a performance was comparable to the bliss one would get while seated on a river bank on a moonlit night. (B. V. Raman & B. V. Lakshmanan in Shruthi No. 8)

MDR's music is easily recognised. Perhaps foremost is the rich, deep voice. Next, is the tempo of his music. By and large MDR preferred the vilambita kala (slow speed), although it is wrong to classify his music as totally slow - he would often include a few faster items with speedy kalpana swara passages. Nonetheless, MDR knew where his musical strength lied and his deep voice was suited to the vilambita kalam and it is was in this that Ramanathan excelled. The
combination of these two features makes his music very relaxing. It has been suggested that continued listening to his music can lower the blood pressure and relieve stress.

His raga alapanas were characterised by effective use of gamakam. They were full of bhavam. Again, his bass tone complemented this facet. His raga essays were not long but were concise and precise. Close listening to these essays will reveal the necessary phrases of the raga, without going into gimmickry or wizardry. The listener was always clear of what the raga was and could get the sweetest essence of the raga. Ramanathan's alapanas in Sahana, Sri, Ananda Bhairavi, Reethigowla and Yadukula Kambhoji will forever hold a special place in Carnatic music history. These moving ragas took on a new dimension when rendered by MDR. Some other ragas that were his favourites include Kedaram, Kambhoji, Hamsadhwani. Like many of the old time greats, MDR did not venture into complicated arithmetic during kalpana swaras but was always had a good control of layam.

During his time at Kalakshetra, MDR taught many students. Since Kalakshetra was primarily an institution for dance, many leading dancers have had music training under MDR. I have spoken to several graduates from Kalakshetra and many have told me that at first they thought MDR’s music was strange and unconventional (perhaps due to his mannerisms) but as they learnt more about the art they could appreciate his music more and could realise its greatness. Rukmini Devi too, was also full praise of MDR’s music and told her students that it was something special.

MDR had a large repertoire of songs but also had his favourite ones. Nonetheless, every rendition (even of the same song) was different. I have heard his Endaro Mahanabhavulu many times but each is different. On some occasions he begins with 'Mahanabhavulu'. During the raga alapan of Sri raga preceding the Thyagaraja’s Pancharatna, he correctly avoids the use Dha as this swara does not occur in this particular composition.

In many of Dikshitah's compositions where a madhyama kala passage occurs he will sing the passage in two speeds creating a dazzling effect. This is the case in Sri Subramanyena Namasthe (Kambhoji) and Manasa Guruguha (Ananda Bhairavi). Also, in the Arabhi pancharatna, he sings the charanas in two speeds as in a varnam.

He has started Sogasuga (Sri Ranjani) with the line 'mridangatalamu'. While singing kalpana swaras for the Vallachi (Navaragamalika) varnam he has returned to the Pallavi line in (Kedaram) on one occasion while he has used Kambhoji finishing phrases with Ma Ga .. Padasaraja on another. There are many more such examples of his imaginative music that other MDR fans can relate. I look forward to listening to his renditions because they always offer something different.

Stage Mannerisms

Some will say that MDR was more famous for his stage mannerisms and abhinaya (facial expressions) than his music. His facial contortions are well renowned. Together with his squint and kudumi (tuft of hair), watching MDR sing was not the most aesthetic experience. If you listen to MDR's live concert recordings you are bound to hear him chat and joke with his accompanists or the audience. In one concert, while seemingly rapt in the lyrics, he interrupts a nerval to explain the meaning of the line to the audience.

MDR would take his own time before a concert, between items and even sometimes during items if he wasn't quite ready. Perhaps his kudumi was a little too tight (or loose) for his liking and he would thus tie and untie it on many instances during a concert. The mridangist would always have to be prepared to play an extra few avartanas between sections of a krithi. Likewise the violinist had to be careful not to rush on to another line or sangathi as MDR loved to repeat lines several times.

His compositions

MDR has composed more than 300 compositions. This includes varnams, krithis and tillanas. He has compositions in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. Many compositions began from spontaneous singing at temples. In some of his later concerts he would sing these compositions. The mudra (signature) he uses is Varadadasa (after his guru). Some of his compositions (like the Bilahari tillana with a line about Kalakshetra), have become standard items in a Kalakshetra dancer's repertoire. I have included the text of this composition at the end of this article.

Some of his compositions:

Krithi, Ragam, Talam, Language
Anaimakkattana, Manirangu, Misra Chapu, Tamil
Aparadhunulellanu, Gowrimanhohari, Adi, Telugu
Bhaja Bhaja Manuja, Behag, Adi, Sanskrit
Bharatesanute, Arabhi, Misra Chapu, Sanskrit
Brindavanaloaka, Kalyani, Adi, Telugu
Brochudaku Samayaidhe, Begada, Rupaka, Telugu
Dandapani, Ramapriya, Rupaka, Telugu
Dari Neveale, Begada, Rupaka, Telugu
Dharmavathi, Dharmavathi, Rupaka, Telugu
Durgadevi, Sri, Adi, Sanskrit
Emdukichapatamu, Purvikalyani, Adi, Tamil
Ennakutram cheideno, Huseni, Adi, Tamil
Gajavadana, Hamsadhwani, Rupaka, Sanskrit

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Vinave, Gowla, Adi, Telugu

MDR’s Bilahari Tillana in Adi talam

P.
dhlm nAdhrudhim thOmdhrithdhlm thana dhIm thathar thirAni thOm tillana (dhIm ...)

A.
nAdhru thadIm thOmdhrithadhIm thana dhirAna
nAdhru dhridhru dhIm thana dhirana dhirana
nAdhruthathAni thOmdhrithadhAni thillAna
gugum thillAna gugum thillAna gugugu thillana (dhIm ...)

Ch.
thipurasundari manOhara trijagadiSa vAmlka purESa
prabhalamaina kaAkshEtramunu kApadumaiya varadADASa
sannutha

thAm tha-kita PD n P D P M G R G jharn M G R jharn l
jharn S R G P D l
S’S’N D S’R’G’P’MG’R’S’N D dhi thAml ginathOml dhi thAmgi-l
nathOml dhithAm ginathOml l (dhIm)

this last section has the following notation:

x 1 2 3 x x 
S’S’N D S’R’G’P’MG’R’S’N D

References


* Sruti (1984), Issue 8 (June), pp. 30-32.

Mohan Ayyar is a young rastika from Sydney, Australia. He has given several Carnatic music concerts on the synthesizer, an instrument relatively foreign to our music. Mohan also takes an active role in organising concerts by musicians from India in Sydney under the auspices of 'Pallavi'.