

**Dorakuna Ituvanti 'Sangeetha' Seva
SRUTI concert by Nedunoori Krishnamurthy**

The title aptly describes the splendid concert by Nedunoori Krishnamurthy on 20 April '91. Nedunoori, as the popular musician is known to his rasikas, was accompanied by the mridangam maestro Umayalapuram Sivaraman and on the violin by Tirupparkadal Veeraraghavan. With his mellifluous voice and pleasing alignment with sruti, Nedunoori regaled the large 'SRUTI' audience with expansive alapanas and flowing kalpanaswarams. Since that day, by a coincidence, was Thyagaraja Jayanthi, Nedunoori chose to sing mostly the kritis of the great composer.

The concert began with 'Rama Neepai' in Kedaram, followed by the popular kriti 'Janaki Ramana' in Suddha Seemanthini ragam. Nedunoori later delineated kamavardhini in beautiful fashion before rendering 'Appa Rama bhakthi entho goppara'. In this kriti, Thyagaraja describes how great is the devotion to Rama. Appropriately, Nedunoori selected for his main piece, the superb Bilahari kriti 'Dorakuna ituvanti seva'. Thyagaraja is supposed to have composed 'Dorakuna' after an elaborate puja to Lord Rama, in the presence of a large audience. Obviously inspired by such an ambience, he rhetorically enquires how it is not easy to get a darshan (seva) of Rama, and goes on to list the attributes to obtain such a seva. This is a long kriti with many sangathis, and as is the case of his kritis of such length, Thyagaraja ends it with crisp madhyama kala prayogams. It requires a highly

proficient musician to do full justice to this kriti. And Nedunoori did exactly that with clear diction and bhava-laden rendition. Earlier, in the elaborat Bilahari alapana, the musicians fully brought out the many contours of this popular ragam. Nedunoori is not only a great singer, he is also a scholar. High among his achievements is the popularization of the compositions of Talappakkam Annamacharya. Annamacharya, who predated Thyagaraja by more than two centuries, had composed numerous songs on various gods and goddesses. However, the original ragams of these compositions, with few exceptions, are unknown. Nedunoori has unearthed many of Annamacharya's compositions and recast them in the present day popular and rare ragams. He invariably includes at least one of Annamacharya's songs in his concerts. That day he sang the tuneful Mukhari keerthana 'Bramhakatiki'. Although most of the songs that Nedunoori sang were in Telugu, he pleased the audience with a couple of Sivan's kritis in Tamil and two Purandara Dasa songs in Kannada also.

Sivaraman and Veeraraghavan gave very good support. Indeed, Sivaraman's accompaniment and tani (solo) were among the many bright features of the very enjoyable concert.

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