

MUSIC REVIEW

Instrument that sang & song that soothed

BANGALORE, April 5. — The Indian Classical Music Evening organised by Philips India at Chowdiah Kalakshetra yesterday featured two popular musicians — young Ravikiran (Karnatic gotuvadyam) and Pandit Jasraj (Hindustani vocal). The event had significance beyond mere entertainment. It indicated that prestigious commercial houses are evincing interest in the promotion of classical music with direct involvement themselves in it.

Some institutions in Delhi and Bombay are doing this work behind the facade of cultural institutions, while the ITC is directly organising music festivals. The entry of Philips will give a further boost to these activities, which of course cannot be handled by the State alone.



Ravikiran

Ravikiran's gotuvadyam recital was an ideal curtain raiser. The supporting talavadya duo — Umayalpuram Shivarman (mrudangam) and Palghat Sundaram (ghatam) served as appetisers. Ravikiran's recital followed routine lines — Vatapi Ganapathi in Hamsadhvani, Appa Rama Bhakti in Pantuvrali, Marivere in Shanmukha-priya and a Navarasa Kannada kriti thrown in, perhaps to produce exotic instrumental sound effects.

The outcome, however, was a marvellous experience in instrumental art and the impact lingered. The instrumental tone itself was limpid and had a singular sheen. The remarkable maturity and elan in the performance (not generally associated with that age) made each minute of the recital very

enjoyable. The music had a remarkably human quality as though the gotuvadyam was singing.

Jasraj started with a rare raga — Sudha Barari. There are many varieties of Barari and here Jasraj sported an exotic palatte of swaras. The Jasraj formula of blending the swaras to produce exciting shades and effects of sound was a sheer delight. One detected shades of Bhatiyar, Bibhas, Jaith and many more lovely shades, yet all combined to set off a richly-melodious and colourful portrait of the raga. The phrases were vibrant; often he settled on single notes and turned them over and the clusters seemed to be cascading in effect. The movements came in graceful curves and sweeps and even the fastest permutation of the taans or swara figures did not impair the melodic character.

Jasraj's incursions into the mandra regions settling finally on the mandra shadja lent depth and power to the music. In the wake of Suddha Barari came Behag and received again, a spacious exposition underlining its lyrical character. A vibrant Basant and



Pandit Jasraj

canticles, for which he is very popular, followed. Jasraj concluded with the customary Bhairavi — a canticle of Guru Nanak.

It was good teamwork indeed. His protegee Girish Wazase gave commendable vocal support and earned kudos. Appa Jalagaonkar and Balakrishnan Iyer supported on harmonium and tabla respectively. —Murali.

UDCO-ITC music festival ends

THE UDCO-ITC music festival which commenced on February 25 with the exciting combination of Durgalal's fantastic footwork and jingling ghunghroos and the masterly, melodious tones of Zakir's tabla, ended around midnight on February 27, with the sonorous, majestic tones and overtones of young Ravi Kiran's gottuvadyam energised by the haunting pulse-beats of Shivaraman's mridangam accompaniment. Dance-items always attract maximum number of *rasikas* in Lucknow, especially if it is Kathak Durgalal himself has been named "a young Adonis in Kathak" for his good looks. With an inspired team of accompanists like the challenging

dered approximately 137 ragas and (kriti). This feat of endurance appeared only as a brief news item in a few journals (like the "Hindu" the "Sruti" and "India Today") because the artiste did it as part of his "Naadopasana", and not to hit the headlines! His "Hamsadhvani", "Poorvi Kalyan", "Devamanohari" and "Todi" with Umayalpuram Sivaraman's superb mridangam-accompaniment deserved a packed hall, but the UDCO audience did not come in large enough numbers to hear this prodigy.

The stars of the 26th evening were Hari Prasad Chaurasiya (flute) with Zakir Hussain on the tabla. These two popular artistes attracted audience in spite of the scare caused by the "bandh", and surprisingly, they stayed on till midnight in spite of conveyance problems! Chaurasiya once again proved that in the art of the flute-playing, he is without a peer today. Through repeated concerts together, Chaurasiya and Zakir have established perfect rapport. He had most appropriately chosen ragas *Vachaspati*, and *Hamsadhvani*, two of the many Karnatic ragas that have become widely popular in Hindustani music.

Malavika usually gives her best in her "favourite city (Lucknow)", but this time she was off-colour. Even Prof Jog's violin accompaniment and Ananda Gopal's tabla could not inspire her.

Ajoy Chakravarty is really like a budding Bade Ghulam Ali and his music brings nostalgic memories of maestro whom Ajoy simply adores and reveres. Ajoy's personality and presentation create instant rapport with the audience. All that is needed to take him to the top is a certain soulfulness which should come with maturity.

The *tala vadya katcheri* would have been better if all the three participants had been evenly matched.

—SUSHEELA MISRA

Music

Zakir on the tabla, the melodious vocalist Asit Desai, Sangi Khan on sarod and Tanil Patel on pakhawaj, Durgalal was at his best. A disciple of Pandit Sundar Prasad, his style is basically of the Jaipur gharana.

Like the *yichitra veena* of the north, the ancient *gottuvadyam* of the south is a very difficult instrument to master. But Ravi Kiran who was hailed as a child prodigy at the age of five, had emerged as an amazing master of *gottuvadyam* by the age of 12, and described by The Astrological Magazine as "a reincarnation of his grandfather, the unforgettable *gottuvadyam* vidwan Narayana Iyengar". Though he is just 18, Ravi Kiran is a mature artiste who has already given hundreds of concerts, and won rave-reviews in his recent performances in the Festival of India series in France and U.S.A. Last year this unassuming *gottuvadyam* virtuoso set up a new record by presenting a non-stop 24 hours musical marathon offering in the Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple, Adayar (Madras), in which he ren-

ரவி கிரண்

ரவி கிரணின் கோட்டு வாத்ய இசை நிகழ்ச்சியில் ஆர். கணேஷ் (வயலின்), திருவாரூர் பக்தவத்சலம் (மிருதங்கம்) இருவரும் பக்கவாத்யமாக அமைந்தனர். (ஒரு தந்தி வாத்யத்திற்கு மற்றொரு தந்தி வாத்ய பக்க வாத்யம் அவசியம்தானா?)

ரவி கிரண் ஒரு பிறவிக் கலைஞர். ஒரு பழுத்த வித்வான். சுருதி சுத்தம், லய சுத்தம், வாசிப்பில் அசாதாரணமான லாகவம், ராக ஆலாபனங்களில் முதிர்ந்த கற்பனைத் திறன் இவையனைத்தும் இவரது தனிச்சிப்புகள். ரவி கிரண் அன்று வழங்கிய "பந்து வராளி" (சிவ சிவ சிவ யனராதா), "ஷட்வித மாரகினி" (பாலுறிராம தூத) "சுருட்டி" (கிதார்த்தம்) "கல்யாணி" (நிதிசால) இவை ஒவ்வொன்றும் ஒன்றை ஒன்று மிஞ்சப் போட்டியிட்டன. "கல்யாணி" ராக ஆலாபனை கற்பனைக் களஞ்சியமாகத் தென்பட்டது. "நிதிசால சுகமா" (சல்யாணி) கிருதியில் "மமதபந்தன யுத நரஸ்துதி சுகமா" என்ற இடத்திலும், முன்னதாக இடம் பெற்ற "சிவ சிவ சிவ யனராதா" (பந்துவராளி) கிருதியில் "ஆகம மூல நுதியிஞ்சி" என்ற இடத்திலும் மேற்கொண்ட நிரவலும் ஸ்வரப்ரஸ்தாரமும் நிறைவுடன் விளங்கின. இந்த விழாவில் முதல் இரண்டு நாட்களுக்குப் பின் அன்றுதான் முதன் முறையாக நிரவல் இடம் பெற்றது என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. நல்ல காலப்ரமாணத்தில் பாவப் பெருக்குடன் வழங்கப்பட்ட சியாமா சாஸ்திரிகளின் "ப்ரோவ வம்ம" (மாஞ்சி) கிருதி இதயத்தைத் தொட்டது.

நிகழ்ச்சிக்கு மிருதங்கம் வாசித்த திருவாரூர் பக்தவத்சலத்தின் துருதுருப்பான வாசிப்பு நிகழ்ச்சிக்கு நல்ல சோபையூட்டியது. அவரது அன்றைய மிச்சுர சாபு தாளத்திற்கான 'தனி'யும், அப்போது கையாண்ட திச்சுர, கண்ட அமைப்புகளும் "கன" கச்சிதமாயிருந்தன.

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