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Sri Krishna
Gana Sabha



There was every indication of the illustrious lineage that surrounds **Lalitha Sharma** in the invocation she rendered to Vishnu.

The evidence kept resurfacing at regular intervals thereafter for the rest of the concert, heightening the sense of speculation. But the final confirmation came only when the curtains went down.

A disciple of Pt. Jasraj, she made her early forays into raag Madhuvanti for a good one hour in two compositions- one in ek taal and the other in teen taal.

The ambience acquired a sombre mood with the exposition of the raag, though sadly, not many people were present to partake of the sumptuous music.

As Lalitha Sharma elaborated the line, expanding each and every syllable, you could slowly but surely piece together 'Mehmananse Ka Lariye.' Interspersing the lyric was the scale in all its ascending and descending notes. Now below the lower tonic, then to the notes right down and then soaring to the upper fifth, Sharma exhibited her vocal powers with immaculate control.

Her formidable accompanists - Salish Kolli on the harmonium and Keshav Joshi on the tabla, took over proceedings at every interval.

A good half an hour into the recital, the first composition in Madhuvanti was still unfolding. Lalitha took up the antrax: 'Preetkiye Pachtaye Bavri Jhoothohi Manko Kales... But, in a performance that is two hours long, she could no longer afford the



Lalitha Sharma and Ratipriya

constraint of time did not show in Sharma's singing.

The piece in Puryadhanashree set to ek taal followed. Then came another famous Jasraj song, this time in Atana: 'Mata Kalika Maha Jagat Janani Bhavani.' 'Mayi Savre' in raag Bhairavi was the final piece. The moment for me to confirm my assumption had also finally arrived.

Ratipriya, a post-graduate student of Sanskrit at the Oriental Research Institute, says with pride that veteran R. Vedavalli has been her source of motivation for several years now. Ratipriya came under the direct tutelage of the Sangeetha Kalanidhi six years ago.

Ratipriya's 75-minute recital showcased some of that rich training. The first sample of that was the varnam in ragam Saranga. She followed that with Swati Tirunal's 'Paripahi Ganadhipa Bhasuramurthe,' in ragam Saveri.

If Tyagaraja continues to enjoy a place of pride among the singers of the younger generations in the 21st century, credit is due in no small measure to gurus who advocate conformity to established musical conventions. Therefore, it was no surprise that Tyagaraja was the mainstay of Ratipriya's performance.

'Etulabrotuvo Teliyadu,' 'Smarane Sukhamu Ramanama' and 'Koluvaivunnade' followed in that order. The vocalist's alapana to ragam Chakravakam was most noticeably mellifluous and she could sustain the same tonal quality for the rest of the recital. Her accompanist Saradha Ravindran, a disciple of A. Kanyakumari, displayed a superb touch on the violin.

During the singing of 'Etulabrotuvo,' one observed how closely Ambur Padmanabhan, who was on the mridangam, followed the vocalist almost word to word

Happy pace

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Sri Thyaga Brahma
Gana Sabha



Sunil Gargyan is one among the galaxy of youngsters trained by the redoubtable P.S.

Narayanaswamy. Under the latter's tutelage for the past six years, Gargyan has also learnt from P.B. Srirangachary for seven years and Nagai Bhashyam from the age of three.

A post-lunch concert could surely do with some brisk singing and Dikshitar's 'Vallabha Nayakasya,' in Begada provided a perfect commencement. This warm up number was followed by a vibrant alapana in Dharmavati. The prati madhyama scale was a telling contrast to the preceding one.

The composition was Dikshitar's 'Parandhamavati Jayati.' Now, with that kind of alliteration, it is reasonable to speculate that any singer would feel instantly energised and propelled forward.

After two consecutive songs of Dikshitar, it was time for Tyagaraja. But 'Intanuchu Varnimpatarama,' in Gundakriya, a Mayamalavagowla derivative, was continued in the same brisk vein.

Narayanaswamy's disciples apparently set store by plenty of ornamentation in virtually every phrase they sing. Gargyan had a field day doing an alapana in Madhyamavati. 'Ramakatha Sudharasa' was the first piece in a somewhat slow tempo.

The niraval at 'Bhaamaamani Janaki Sowmitri,' was interesting. Other artists sometimes choose a different line to embellish.

The mridangam solo by young J.