

December 28, 2009

## Ragas in all their grandeur

H. Ramakrishnan



‘Karthikeya Gangeya Gauri Thanaya’ in Thodi is such a magnificent composition. Its very structure is outstanding. This critic had had the occasion to listen to M.S. Subbulakshmi rendering this piece soulfully at the Sikkil Singaravelar Temple in the early sixties. M.S. sang all the three charanas.

After a detailed delineation that covered every possible sanchara of the regal raga, **S.P. Ramh** rendered this kriti brilliantly. If his raga essay touched the entire canvas of Thodi through all three sthayis, the rendering of the kriti itself took the listeners to the temples of Lord Muruga. He sang the charanam commencing with ‘Mal Maruga Shanmugha’ with all possible sangatis. Kalpanaswaras brought out the attractive shades. M.R. Gopinath on

the violin essayed an alapana in his own style, revealing the unique facets of the raga, which the instrument brings forth. Ramh’s swaraprastharas were at the pallavi itself.

The thani by B. Ganapathiraman on the mridangam was a rhythmic delight. The tisra nadai that he presented was precise and aesthetic. His accompaniment too, enriched the music.

Earlier Ramh created a serene, pensive mood through the Mukhari alapana. The response on the violin evoked even more poignancy. Tyagaraja’s all time favourite, ‘Entha Ninnai,’ the very grammar for Mukhari, set in Rupaka Tala was the chosen kriti. The niraval and swaras were at ‘Kanulara.’ There was such a healthy competition between the vocalist and violinist that the audience got the cream of the raga.

The Ritigowla came out in its charming form in ‘Thathvamariya Tharama,’ while Sahana in all its musical nuances emerged vibrantly in ‘Ee Vasudha’ of Tyagaraja. The chittaswaras for the latter were elegantly presented. The Hamsanadham raga alapana and the krithi ‘Banturiti’ were an illustration of the vocalist’s grip over all departments of music. The nireval and swaras were at ‘Ramanama Mane.’ The Swara korvais ending with rishabham, especially ri ma ri sa r; sa ni pa ni sa ri; ri pa ma ri, were so musical that Hamsanadham filled the entire auditorium. A short alapana preceded Dikshitar’s ‘Annapurne’ in Sama. If the Brindavanasaranga piece ‘Kaliyugavaradan’ evoked emotions of devotion, the Bagesri piece ‘Govindamiha’ of Narayana Tirtha was a combination of poignancy and Bhakti.

Ramh commenced his concert with the Lalgudi varnam in Bowli, ‘Arunodhayame,’ a bright beginning for a morning concert. He touched the upper Panchamam with ease. Again, he concluded the recital with the Lalgudi tillana in Mand.