

Compositions and Amateurishness

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All musicians cannot become composers; all compositions cannot be music. The growing tendency among musicians and of musicologists too, to compose songs with a sense of self-sufficiency is bewildering. Knowledge of music and its technique are not alone the fundamental requirements for creativity in that art. A deep understanding of the DHATU and MATU (elements of words and of music respectively) before constructing the scaffolding of a song are a desideratum. Further for selecting the appropriate word which, apart from its meaning or sense, should have in itself the capacity to link in smoothness with the next one always needs an ear for symphony. The rhythm not only of the external measure (tala) in which the song is to be set, but an inner swing and harmony in the collocation of the words of the Sahitya have to be maintained.

There is always a desire to take up a VARNA METTU already in existence and with just a little change in the EDUPPU (start) or in the CHARANA, a fresh song is composed without the least compunction that it is more or less plagiarism. Normally a Sahitya belonging to one individual and the setting to music done by another happens to be the case; it hardly would enthuse the connoisseur or Rasika. Word-clipping and meaningless drawing out of a SWARA which may not add beauty to the MOORCHANA may sometimes alienate a true Rasika to detect the flaw in the SILPA (art-construction) of the KRITI.

More than anything else, the DHYANA or contemplation to secure for the song a basical intuitive RASA (flavour) in order to evoke ready response in the Sahridaya is most necessary. Ardour and devotion to the

Supreme Being were so much of an asset with our great Musical Trinity, THYAGAYYA, MUTHUSWAMI DIKSHIDAR and SYAMA SASTRI, that they easily could inspire, rouse the spiritual urges, complete the experience of fulfilment for a listener and transport him to a living plane of unalloyed serenity. What is woefully lacking in most of the modern composers is this absorbing education in the essentials of musical creativity. However much skill and technical perfection may be engaging for the moment, unless originality in the attempt is assuring apart from the resonance in the intoning of words, it will all appear mere words stacked in the shadow mould of a song. The gift for composing is akin to that of poetry. If poetry surges up from the soul instead of from the lips there never will be occasion for its dying on the lips. It will regenerate generations to resort to its beauty with a consuming passion without loss of serenity.

Composers are plenty and they vie with one another to have their songs included in the programmes and lists of songs of top-musicians. Their ambitions get satisfied if such obliging on the part of the vidwans are calculated to win greater popularity for them. Still, the effort sometimes of leading Vidwans to oblige cause disgust in their hearts and leave them much in embarrassment. But real merit cannot fail to attract attention. Such is rare indeed.

Sri Papanasam Sivan is said to have been once moved to the core by DARSANA of God Kapaliswrar seated on his high Vahana and decked with His beatitude more than by His glittering jewels, and immediately in his mind a few words of a Sahitya in the PALLAVI for a song rose. Finding the

occasion and urge irrepressible, he atonce left for his home to complete the entire Kriti which sprouted as the unforgettable Kamboji Kriti of his: காணக்கண்கோடி வேணும் கபாலி உன்தன் பவனியை (A million of eyes are needed, Oh Lord' to witness thine splendour of gait in procession).

Few and far between are such gifted **Vaggeyakaras**. One valid reason for Sivan's training as an unusual composer is the fact of his having steeped himself in Thyagaraja's immortal pieces. Whenever he sang at any public function, he always gave more of his bountiful repertoire from Thyagaraja than from his own. Despite his own Sahitya capable of moving hearts by their choiceness of music and diction, he definitely loved to drink of his Thyagaraja, lave in his melodies and almost immerse himself in it.

Today's composers should first study intensely the works of the Trinity of carnatic music before launching upon their own creativity. Vast and varied have been the aspects of musical compositions covered by the great ones. They have provided enough scope for any amount of imagination (MONODHRMAM) to play and sour in the expanses of their creations. They have not yet palled on our ears inspite of generations of succeeding vidwans having sung the same Kritis over and over again.

It is not a trick to compose real songs. It is one of the true marks of a genuine artiste not to view the art of composing as a matter of significance of his own importance in the public eye, but an earnest endeavour to satisfy his claim to recognition by his staying quality and power to move hearts. ●

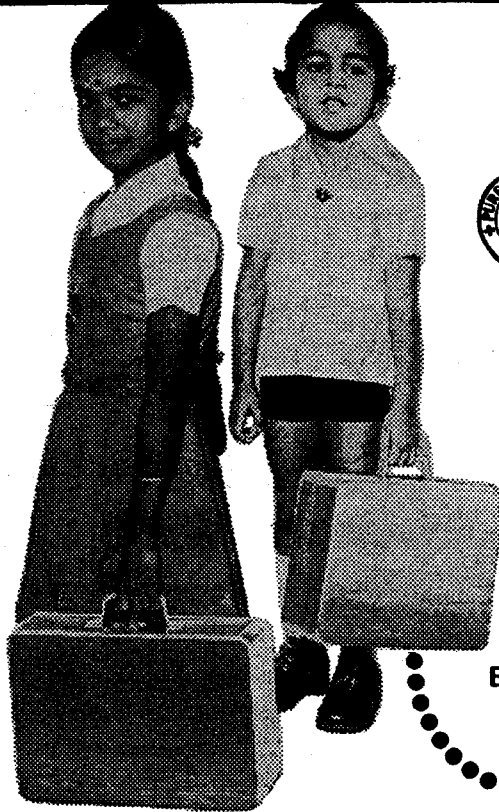
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