

Achievers of Art



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Guru Dr. Lalitha Srinivasan

- *Shilpa Nanjappa, pg 17*



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ಈ ಸಂಚಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ

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ಮಧುರಜಾತಿಯ ರಾಗಗಳು:

ಭೈರವ:

ಮಧುರ ಜಾತಿಯ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ವೃಷಭ, ಧೈವತ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಕೋಮಲವಾಗಿರುವ ಮತ್ತು ಗಂಧಾರ ಹಾಗೂ ನಿಷಾದ ತೀವ್ರವಾಗಿರುವ ಸ್ವರಗಳುಳ್ಳ ರಾಗಗಳನ್ನು ಮಧುರ ಎಂದು ಸಂಕೇತಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಧುರ ಜಾತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭೈರವ ಇದು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ರಾಗವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದರ ವಾದಿ ಸ್ವರ ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತ. ಗಾಯನ ಸಮಯ ಸೂರ್ಯೋದಯದ ಮೊದಲನೆಯ ಪ್ರಹರವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದರ ಆರೋಹ ಮತ್ತು ಅವರೋಹ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಂಠ ಸಂಗೀತಕ್ಕೆ ಅನುಕೂಲವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಆರೋಹದಲ್ಲಿ (ಖಮಾಜ್‌ರಾಗದಂತೆ) ರಿಷಭ ಸ್ವರವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟುಬಿಡುವ ರೂಢಿಇದೆ. ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತ ಉಲಿಯುವಾಗ ಕೋಮಲ ನಿಷಾದದ ಮತ್ತು ಕೋಮಲ ರಿಷಭವನ್ನು ಉಲಿಯುವಾಗ ಕೋಮಲ ಗಂಧಾರದ ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಯೋಗ್ಯವೆಂದು ಪ್ರಾಜ್ಞರ ಮತವಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿಲಂಬಿತ ಆಲಾಪ ಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಧ ಈ ಸ್ವರಗಳಲ್ಲಿನ ಮೂಲವಾಗಿರುವ ಕರುಣ ಭಾವನೆ ಇಲ್ಲವಾಗಿ ಭೈರವವನ್ನು ಗಾಂಭೀರ್ಯ ತುಂಬಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಮೇಲೆ ಹೇಳಿರುವುದು ಶಿವಮತ ಭೈರವರಾಗದ ಅವಶೇಷ ಚಿಹ್ನವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂತಲೂ ಹೇಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮ ರಿ ಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಆರೋಹಿ ಮೀಂಡ್ ಈ ರಾಗದ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿದೆ. ಭೈರವ ರಾಗ ಆಲಾಪನಾ ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಹಾಡುಗರಿಗೆ ವಿಶೇಷ ಅನುಕೂಲತೆಯನ್ನು ಉಂಟು ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಭಾತ ಭೈರವ, ಅಹಿರ್‌ಭೈರವ, ಧುಲಿಯಾ ಭೈರವ, ಬಂಗಾಲ ಭೈರವ, ಆನಂದ ಭೈರವ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಅಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ಸ್ವರೂಪಗಳು ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ಗಾಯಕನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂಥ ರಾಗಗಳು ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಸ್ವರೂಪಗಳು ಜನರಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಚಾರಗೊಳಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ರಾಗರೂಪಗಳು ಚಿತ್ತಾಕರ್ಷಕ ರೀತಿಯಿಂದ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಪಡಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟರೆ ಕಲೆಯು ವಿಸ್ತಾರಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲವಾದರೆ ರಾಗಗಳು ಕೇಳುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ದೊರೆಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಮತ್ತು ಗಾಯಕನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಉಳಿದುಬಿಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸು ರಸಿಕ ಓದುಗರ ಕಿವಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ರಾಗಗಳ ಹೆಸರುಗಳಾದರೂ ತಲುಪಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಇಂಥ ರಾಗಗಳ ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯು ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗಲಿ ಎಂಬ ಉದ್ದೇಶದಿಂದ ಭೈರವದ ಕೆಲವು ಸ್ವರೂಪಗಳನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿಕಾಣಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಭೈರವ: (ಪ್ರಚಲಿತ)

ಧಧ, ಪ, ಮ ಗಾ ಮ-ರಿ, ಸಾ ಇದು ಭೈರವ ರಾಗದ ಗುಂಜನ ಸ್ಥಾನ. ಸಾ ರಿ-ಸಾ ಗಾ ಮ-ಪ ಮ, ರಿ ಗಾ ಮ; ಪ ಧಧ, ನೀ ಧ ಪ, ಮ ಗಾ ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಗಾ ಮ ಪ, ಧಧ, ಪ ಮ, ಗಾ ಮ, ಗಾ ರಿ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಮ ಪಧ, ನೀ ಸಾ-ನೀ ಧ-ಪ ಮ, ಗಾ, ಪ ಮ, ಗಾ ಮ-ರಿ, ಸಾ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಸ್ವರಸಂಗತಿಗಳು ಇರುತ್ತವೆ.

ಅಹಿರ್ ಭೈರವ:

ಭೈರವ ಪ್ರಕಾರದ ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ತೀವ್ರ ಧೈವತ ಮತ್ತು ಕೋಮಲ ನಿಷಾದ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಾ ಗಾ ಮ-ರಿ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಗಾ ಮ-ನಿ ಧಾ-ಪ ಧಾ-ಮ-ಗಾ ರಿ-ಮ; ಪ-ನಿ ಧಾ, ಗಾ ಮ-ರಿ-ಸಾ. ಧಾ ನಿ ಸಾ ರಿ-ಸಾ-ಧಾ ನಿ, ಪ ಗಾ, ಮ-ರಿ ಸಾ.

ಪ್ರಭಾತ ಭೈರವ:

ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಆರೋಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಯಶಃ ರಿಷಭ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮ ವರ್ಜ್ಯವಾಗಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಸಾ ಗಾ ಪ, ಗಾ ಮ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಧಧ, ಪ-ಗಾ ಮ ಗಾ ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಪ-ಧಧ ನೀ ಸಾ-ರಿ ಸಾ; ನೀ ಧಧ-ಪ ಮ ಗಾ ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಗಾ-ಮ, ಮ ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ ಸಾ; ಹೀಗೆ ಈ ರಾಗದ

ಸ್ವರೂಪವಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಪ್ರಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಧ್ಯಮವು ಲಲಿತಾಂಗವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸುವ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮವು ಮುಕ್ತವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಭಾವಶಾಲಿಯಾಗಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡು ಬರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಧುಲಿಯಾ ಭೈರವ:

ಇದು ಭೈರವ ಪ್ರಕಾರದ ರಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಮೋಹಕವಾದುದು. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ತೀವ್ರ ಹಾಗೂ ಕೋಮಲ ಎರಡೂ ಪ್ರಕಾರದ ರಿಷಭ ಪ್ರಯೋಗವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಮುಕ್ತವಾಗಿದೆ. ಧ, ಪ, ಮ-ರಿ, ಸಾ ರೀ ಸಾ; ಗಾ ಮ, ನೀ ಧ, ನೀ-ಸಾ ರಿ ಸಾ-ಧ ನೀ ಸಾ ರೀ ಸಾ, ಧ-ಪ ಮ-ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ-ರೀ, ಸಾ, ಗಾ-ಮ ಹೀಗೆ ಈ ರಾಗದ ಚಲನವಿದೆ. ಮ-ರಿ ಮೀಂಡ್ ಯುಕ್ತವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಬಂಗಾಲ ಭೈರವ:

ಈ ಪ್ರಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಷಾದ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ವರ್ಜ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾ ಗಾ ಮ ಪ, ಧಧ ಪ ಧ, ಸಾ, ಸಾ ರಿ, ಸಾ ಧ-ಪ ಮ, ಗಾ ಮ ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ ಹೀಗೆ ಈ ರಾಗದ ಸ್ವರೂಪವಿದೆ.

ಮೇಲಿನ ಎಲ್ಲ ರಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯ ವಿಶೇಷತೆ ಸಪ್ತಕದ ಉತ್ತರಾರ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತೀತವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಶಿವಮತ ಭೈರವ:

ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೋಮಲ ಹಾಗೂ ತೀವ್ರಗಂಧಾರ ಮತ್ತು ನಿಷಾದ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಗಾ ಮ ಪ ಮ ರಿ, ರಿ, ರಿ ಗ ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಮ ಪ ಧ, ನಿ ಧ, ನೀ ಸಾ, ನೀ ಧ, ಧ ನಿ ಧಧ ಪ, ಗಾ ಮ; ಗಾ ಮ ರಿ, ರಿ ಗ ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಮ-ರಿ, ಗ-ರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ನಿ-ಧ ಈ ಸ್ವರಗಳು ಮೀಂಡ್ ಪ್ರಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿವೆ.

ಭೈರವರಾಗದ ಸ್ವರೂಪದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆ ಮಹಾದೇವನ ಧ್ಯಾನಸ್ಥ ಭಾವನೆಯುಳ್ಳ, ರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕಣ್ಣಿಂದ ತರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಭೈರವದ ಸ್ವರಮೂರ್ತಿಯ ವರ್ಣನೆ ಮಹಾದೇವನ ಪುರಾಣದಲ್ಲಿನ ವರ್ಣನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ಆ ಸ್ವರಗಳಿಂದ ಮಹಾದೇವನನ್ನು ಗೌರವಿಸುವುದರ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಇಂಥದೊಂದು ಕಲ್ಪನೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆಯಲ್ಲ; ಸಮಾಧಿ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಿಂದ ಇದೀಗ ತಾನೆ ಜಾಗೃತಗೊಂಡ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಧನಿಮಿಲಿತವಾಗಿರುವ ಅವನ ಕಣ್ಣುಗಳು ಕೋಮಲ ರಿಷಭ ಮತ್ತು ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತ ಸ್ವರಗಳು, ಭಾಲಮಧ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಪ್ರಭಾವೀ ಶುದ್ಧ ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಆತನ ದಿಟ್ಟಮಯವಾದ ಮೂರನೇಯ ಕಣ್ಣು, ಗಾಂಧಾರ ರೂಪಿ ಗಂಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಹ್ಲಾದಕಾರಕ ಪಂಚಮಸ್ವರೂಪಿಯಾದ ಚಂದ್ರ ಆತನ ತಲೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ವಿರಾಜಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ. ಈ ವರ್ಣನೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ಭೈರವರಾಗದ ಆಕಲನೆ, ಆಲಾಪನೆ, ಗಾಯನ ಅಥವಾ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತಿ ಸರಳ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಹಜವಾಗಿ ಆಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದು ಯಾರಿಗೂ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದೇನಿಲ್ಲ. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ರಾಗವನ್ನು ಹಾಡುವಾಗ ಗಾಯಕನು ಯಾವ ಪ್ರಕಾರದ ವೃತ್ತಿ ಅಥವಾ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾನೋ; ಅಂದರೆ ರಾಗದ ಮೂಲ ವೃತ್ತಿ, ಧರ್ಮ, ಅದರ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠೆ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಎಷ್ಟು ಸಾಧ್ಯವೋ ಅಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರಭಾವಶಾಲಿಯಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟ ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಉದ್ದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಇದೊಂದು ಸಹಕಾರಿ ಮಾರ್ಗವಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಾಲಂಗಡದಂಥ ಕ್ಷುದ್ರರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಶೃಂಗಾರಿಕ ಲಾವಣಿಯನ್ನು ಒಬ್ಬ ಗಾಯಕಿ ಅಥವಾ ನಟಿ ಸಾಭಿನಯವಾಗಿ ಸುಂದರವಾಗಿ ಹಾಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿ ಆ ಲಾವಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿನ ಮುರ್ಕಿ, ಖಟಕಾ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಅಲಂಕಾರ ಆ ಸ್ವರಗಳನ್ನು ಭೈರವರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸುವ ಮೋಹ ಅನೇಕ ಗಾಯಕರಿಗೆ ಉಂಟಾದರೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಉಪಾಯವಿಲ್ಲ ಮತ್ತು ಅಂಥ ಮೋಹಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಗಾಗುವುದರಿಂದ ಹಾಗೂ ಅದರಿಂದ ಭೈರವರಾಗದ ಗಾಂಭೀರ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠೆಯನ್ನು ನಾಶ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಅನರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ನಿವಾರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾದರೆ ವಾದಿ ಸಂವಾದಿ ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಲ್ಪನಿಕ ರಾಗಮೂರ್ತಿ

ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಒಂದೇ ಉಪಾಯ ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಕಾರರು ಸೂಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಉದ್ದೇಶವನ್ನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿದಾಗ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ರಾಗ ಸ್ವರೂಪಗಳು ಹೊಳೆದರೆ ಅದನ್ನು ಹಾಸ್ಯಸ್ವದವೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾಗದು. ನಮ್ಮ ಸಂಗೀತದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಮಸ್ವರೀ ರಾಗಗಳ ಅನೇಕ ಜೋಡಿಗಳು ಕಂಡು ಬರುತ್ತವೆ. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ರಾಗ ಗಂಭೀರವಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಚಂಚಲ ವೃತ್ತಿಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ರಾಗದ ಜಾತಿ ಒಂದೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದರೂ ವೃತ್ತಿ ಭಿನ್ನವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ರಾಗದ ಭಿನ್ನ ಸ್ವರೂಪವನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಅದನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲರ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಬಿಂಬಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಬಲವಾದ ಉಪಾಯ ಇದಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಇದೆಯೇ?

ನಾಟಕದ ಹಾಡು

ಈಶ ಚಿಂತಾ ನಿವಾರಿ ಸಾರಿ - ಶಾರದಾ

ಕಾಲಂಗಡಾ

ಇದು ಮಧುರ ಜಾತಿಯ ಕ್ಷುದ್ರರಾಗವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದರ ಆರೋಹ ಮತ್ತು ಅವರೋಹಗಳ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಬಹುತೇಕವಾಗಿ ಐದು ಸ್ವರಗಳ ಪರಿಧಿಗೆ ಸೀಮಿತಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಕ್ಷುದ್ರಗಾಯನ ಪ್ರಕಾರಗಳಿಗೆ ಯೋಗ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಕಾಲಂಗಡಾ, ಪೀಲು, ಝಿಂಝೋಟಿ, ಜಂಗಲಾ, ಪಹಾಡಿ, ಗಾರಾ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ರಾಗಗಳ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರವು ಬಹಳಷ್ಟು ಸಲ ಪಂಚಮ ಸ್ವರದ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಸ್ವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಸೀಮಿತವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಪ್ರಾಥಮಿಕ ಅವಸ್ಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿನ ಜಾನಪದ ಗೀತೆಗಳ ಸ್ವರಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ಈ ರಾಗಗಳ ಪ್ರಪಂಚ ವಿಸ್ತಾರಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳಷ್ಟು ಸ್ವರಗಳು ತುಂಬಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡುಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇಂಥ ರಾಗಗಳ ಆಂತರ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಂಚಮ ಸ್ವರದ ಮುಂದೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಸಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ ಪ್ರಕಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಪಂಚಮ ಸ್ವರವನ್ನೇ ಷಡ್ಜ ಎಂದು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿ ಅಂದರೆ ನಾಲ್ಕು ಅಥವಾ ಐದು ಸ್ವರಗಳಷ್ಟು ಎತ್ತರಕ್ಕೆ ಷಡ್ಜವನ್ನು ಏರಿಸಿ ಈ ರಾಗಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಪಂಚಮದ ಮುಂದಿನ ಸ್ವರಗಳು ಅಥವಾ ಷಡ್ಜದ ಕೆಳಗಿರುವ ಒಂದೆರಡು ಸ್ವರಗಳನ್ನು ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಈ ರಾಗದ ಪರಿಧಿಯನ್ನು ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ತಾಗಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಮೀಂಡ್, ಗಮಕಗಳಂಥ ಭಾರಿ ಅಲಂಕಾರಗಳು ಕಾಲಂಗಡಾ ರಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿನ ಮೂರು ನಾಲ್ಕು ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸ್ವರಗಳ ಗುಂಜನವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಮಾಡಬಹುದಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅಂಥ ಗುಂಜನಗಳೇ ರಾಗದ ಸ್ವರೂಪವನ್ನು ಬಿಂಬಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಕಾಲಂಗಡಾ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಗಾ-ರಿ ಸಾ; ಗಾ ಮ ಗಾ-ರಿ ಸಾ; ಮ ಪ ಗಾ-ರಿ ಸಾ; ಪ ಧ ಪ ಮ, ಗಾ-ರಿ ಸಾ; ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಸ್ವರಸಂಗತಿಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ ಇವುಗಳ ಸತತ ಗುಂಜನ ಕಿಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗುಯ್‌ಗುಡುತ್ತದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅದರಿಂದಾಗಿ ಕಾವ್ಯಾಕ್ಷರಗಳಿಗೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ನಾದವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ನೂರಾರು ಪದಗಳನ್ನು ನಾಟಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ 'ತೂಟಾಕಚಿರುನ ಹೀ ಮಾನ' ಶಾರದಾ ನಾಟಕದ ಈ ಹಾಡು ಮಾದರಿ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಬಹುದು.

ರಾಮಕಲಿ

ಮಧುರಾ ಜಾತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಮಾವಿಷ್ಟಗೊಳಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ರಾಮಕಲಿಯು ಸುಂದರ ರಾಗಿಣಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದು ಭೈರವದ ಸ್ವರೂಪವನ್ನೇ ಹೊಂದಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಚಲನೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಭೈರವದಂತೆ ಪ್ರಭಾವಶಾಲಿಯಲ್ಲ. ಮತ್ತು ರಾಗದ ವೃತ್ತಿ ಕೂಡ ಅದರಷ್ಟು ಗಂಭೀರವಲ್ಲ. ಭೈರವ ಇದು ಉತ್ತರಾಂಗ ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾದ ರಾಗ ಎಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದರೂ ಅದರ ವಿಶೇಷತೆ ಸ್ವರಸಪ್ತಕದ ಪೂರ್ವಾರ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ವಿಕಸನಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾಗಿ ರಾಮಕಲಿಯ ವಿಕಾಸ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಲಾಸ ಸಪ್ತಕದ ಉತ್ತರಾರ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ. ಪಂಚಮದ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಒತ್ತುಕೊಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಇದಿಷ್ಟರಿಂದಲೇ ಭಿನ್ನವಾದ ರಾಗಿಣಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲವಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಪಂಚಮಕ್ಕೆ ತೀವ್ರ ಮಧ್ಯಮದ

ಆರೋಹಿ ಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಮತ್ತು ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತಕ್ಕೆ ಕೋಮಲ ನಿಷಾದದ ಅವರೋಹಿ ಜೊತೆಯನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸುವ - ಮಾ,ಪ ಧ ನಿ ಧ ಪ ಮಾ ಪ- ಸ್ವರಸಂಗತಿಯನ್ನು ರಾಮಕಲಿಯ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಲಕ್ಷಣವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಗುರುತಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ಭೇದವೆಂದರೆ ಭೈರವದಲ್ಲಿನ ಮ-ರಿ ಸಾ ಈ ಮೀಂಡ್‌ಯುಕ್ತ ಸಂಗತಿಗೆ ಬದಲಾಗಿ ಗಾ, ರಿ, ಸಾ ಎಂಬ ಸಂಗತಿಯನ್ನು ರಾಮಕಲಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದಲ್ಲದೆ ರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಧ ಈ ಸ್ವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಭೈರವದಂತೆ ಆಂದೋಲನವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ ರಾಗದ ಗಾಯನ ಸಮಯ ದಿನದ ಮೊದಲ ಪ್ರಹರವಾಗಿದೆ. ಒಂದೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕುಲೀನ ಮಹಿಳೆಯೊಬ್ಬಳು ತನ್ನ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸುವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಹಣೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ದೊಡ್ಡದಾದ ಕುಂಕುಮ ತಿಲಕವನ್ನು ಇರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಕಂಗೊಳಿಸುವಂತೆ ರಾಮಕಲಿ ರಾಗದ ಮುದ್ರೆ ಮತ್ತು ವೃತ್ತಿ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಭೈರವರಾಗದ ತದ್ರೂಪ ಎನಿಸಿದರೂ ಇದನ್ನು ಆ ರಾಗದೊಂದಿಗೆ ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ ಇರುವ ಸಹಚಾರಿಣಿಯಂತೆ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ತೀವ್ರ ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಮತ್ತು ಕೋಮಲ ನಿಷಾದದಂತಹ ವಿಜಾತೀಯ ಸ್ವರಸಂಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಅಭಿಮಾನದಿಂದ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತಗೊಳಿಸಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ರಾಮಕಲಿ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ವೃತ್ತಿಯ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛಂದವಾದ ರಾಗಿಣಿಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ಗಾ ಮ ಪ, ಮಾ ಪ ಧ ನಿ, ಧ ಪ- ಇದು ರಾಮಕಲಿಯ ಗುಂಜನ ಸ್ಥಾನವಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾ, ರಿ ಗಾ ಮ ಪ, ಮಾ ಪ ಪ ಧ ನಿ ಧ ಪ, ಮಾ ಪ, ಗಾ ಮ, ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಮ ಪ, ನೀ ಧ ಪ ಮಾ ಪ ಧ, ಮಾ ಪ ಗಾ-; ಸಾ ನೀ, ಧ ಪ, ಮಾ ಪ ಧ ನಿ ಧ ಮಾ ಪ, ಮ ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಹೀಗೆ ಈ ರಾಗದ ಚಲನೆಯಿದೆ.

ನಾಟಕದ ಹಾಡು

ಹೋಯ ಸಂಸಾರತರು

- ಮೂಕನಾಯಕ

ಜೋಗಿ ಅಥವಾ ಜೋಗಿಯಾ:

ಮಧುರ ಜಾತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜೋಗಿಯಾ ಇದು ಔಡವ ಷಾಡವ ಪ್ರಕಾರದರಾಗವಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾ, ರಿ, ಮ ಪ ಧ ಸಾ ಹೀಗೆ ಆರೋಹ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾ ನೀ ಧ ಪ ಮ ರಿ ಸಾ ಹೀಗೆ ಅವರೋಹವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದೆ. ಕ್ಷಚಿತ್ತಾಗಿ ಅವರೋಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಗಾಂಧಾರವನ್ನು ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸುವ ರೂಢಿ ಉಂಟು. ಈ ರಾಗದ ವಾದಿ ಕೋಮಲ ಮಧ್ಯಮವಾಗಿದೆ. ಗಾಯನ ಸಮಯ ಮಧ್ಯರಾತ್ರಿಯಿಂದ ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ ದಿನ ಮಧ್ಯದವರೆಗೆ ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಹಾಡಬಹುದು. ಈ ರಾಗ ಹೃದಯಸ್ಪರ್ಶಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ಇದನ್ನು ಕ್ಷುದ್ರಜಾತಿಯ ರಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣ ಈ ರಾಗ ಶಬ್ದನಿಷ್ಠ ರಾಗವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ರಾಗಿಣಿಯ ವೃತ್ತಿ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಶೋಕಾಕುಲವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಈ ರಾಗವನ್ನು ಕೇಳುತ್ತಲೇ ಪತಿಯ ಭಾವಚಿತ್ರದ ಮುಂದೆ ಕುಳಿತುಕೊಂಡ ನಾರಿ, ತಲೆಯನ್ನು ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ಆನಿಸಿ ಅವನ ಧ್ಯಾನವನ್ನು ಮಾಡುವ ಛಾಯೆಯನ್ನು ಅಥವಾ ಅವನಿಂದ ಪರಿತ್ಯಕ್ತಳಾದ ಕರುಣಾಮೂರ್ತಿಯ ಛಾಯೆಯನ್ನು ಕಣ್ಣು ಮುಂದೆ ನಿಲ್ಲಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೋಮಲ ಮಧ್ಯಮದ ನಂತರ ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತದ ಆಂದೋಲಿತ ಧ್ವನಿ ಕಿವಿಗೆ ಬೀಳುತ್ತಲೇ ಶೋಕ ರಸದ ವಾತಾವರಣ ತಕ್ಷಣ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಮತ್ತು ಇನ್ನುಳಿದ ಸ್ವರಗಳ ಮೇಲೂ ಇದರ ಪ್ರಭಾವ ಉಂಟಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದಿಷ್ಟರಿಂದಲೇ ಸಮಾಧಾನವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೇನೋಎಂಬಂತೆ ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತದ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಕೋಮಲ ನಿಷಾದವನ್ನೂ ಸಹ ಆಗಾಗ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದಲ್ಲದೆ ಜೋಗಿಯಾದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತವು ಕಿಂಚಿತ್‌ಆಂದೋಲಿತ ಮತ್ತು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಕೋಮಲಮಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಧ್ಯಮದಿಂದ ಕೋಮಲ ರಿಷಭಕ್ಕೆ ಬರುವಾಗ ಭೈರವದಂತೆಯೇ ಮ-ರಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಮೀಂಡ್‌ನ್ನು ಬಳಸದೆಯೇ ರಿಷಭದ ಮೇಲೆ ಆಘಾತವನ್ನು ಉಂಟು ಮಾಡಿ ಅದರಿಂದ ಹುಂಕಾರವನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿದಂತೆ ಭಾಸ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೇವಲ ಸ್ವರಾಲಾಪನದ

ಮೂಲಕ ಕಂಠವನ್ನು ದಾಟಿ ಬರುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಣ್ಣಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೀರು ಹರಿಸುವ ಸಹಜ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯ ಜೋಗಿಯಾದಂತೆ ಇನ್ನುಳಿದ ಯಾವರಾಗಕ್ಕೂ ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಮುರ್ಕಿ, ತಾನ, ಖಟಕಾ, ಗಮಕ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಅಲಂಕಾರ ಈ ರಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಲಘುವಾದ ಮೀಂಡ್ ಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಂದೋಲನ ಇವೆರಡೆ ಈ ರಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಅಲಂಕಾರಗಳು. ಕುಂಕುಮ ತಿಲಕ ಮತ್ತು ಮಂಗಳಸೂತ್ರ ಇವೆರಡಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಅಲಂಕಾರ ಶೋಕ ವ್ಯಾಕುಲಯುಕ್ತ ಮಹಿಳೆಗೆ ಎಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಧ್ಯ? ಜೋಗಿ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುರ್ಕಿ, ಖಟಕೆ ಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿದರೆ ಕಾಲಂಗಡಾ ರಾಗದ ಛಾಯೆ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಮತ್ತು ಗಮಕ, ತಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿದರೆ ಭೈರವ ರಾಗದ ಭಾಸ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ರಿ, ಮ-ಧ-ಪ ಮ-ರಿ-ಸಾ ಇದು ಜೋಗಿಯಾ ರಾಗದ ಗುಂಜನ ಸ್ಥಾನವಾಗಿದೆ. ಧ-ಪ-ಮ-ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಸಾ ರಿ, ಮ-ಪ ಧ-ಮ-ಪ ಮ-ರಿ-ಸಾ; ಮ-ಪ ಧ-ಸಾ-ನೀ ಸಾ ರಿ, ಸಾ; ಸಾ ನೀ ಧ ಮ, ಧ-ನಿ-ಧ-ಪ-ಮ, ರಿ, ಸಾ; ಇದು ರಾಗವಾಚಕ ಆಲಾಪನೆಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿನ ಹಾಡು

ಜಾತೋಕಿ ಮಮ ಶಕುಂತಲ - ಶಾಕುಂತಲ

ಮಾರ್ಯಾ ಮನೇಚಿ ಹಿತಗುಜ - ಸೌಭದ್ರ

ವಿಭಾಸ

ವಿಭಾಸ ಇದು ಮಧುರ ಜಾತಿಯಲ್ಲಿನ ಔಡವ ರಾಗವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಮತ್ತು ನಿಷಾದ ಈ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಜ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಸೂರ್ಯೋದಯದ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ರಾಗವನ್ನು ಹಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ರಿಷಭ ಮತ್ತು ಧೈವತ ಕೋಮಲವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ದೇಸಕಾರ ಅಥವಾ ಭೂಪ ಈ ರಾಗಗಳಿಗಿಂತ ವಿಭಾಸರಾಗವನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿ ಹಾಡುವುದು ಕಠಿಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತ ಇದು ವಾದಿಸ್ವರವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ತಾನಕ್ರಿಯೆಗೆ ಅಡಚಣೆಯನ್ನುಂಟು ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ತೊಂದರೆಯನ್ನು ನಿವಾರಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ತೀವ್ರಧೈವತವನ್ನು ಬಳಸುವ ರೂಢಿಯನ್ನು ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಕಾಣುತ್ತೇವೆ. ನಿಷಾದ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ವರ್ಜ್ಯವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತ ಮತ್ತು ತಾರಷಡ್ಡಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಇರುವ ಅಂತರ ತಾನಕ್ರಿಯೆಗೆ ಸಹಜವಾಗಿ ಜೋಡಿಸುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಂತೆಯೇ ಧೈವತವನ್ನು ದ್ವಿರುಕ್ತ ಅಂದರೆ ಸಾ ಧಧ ಪ, ಧಧ ಪ ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ, ಪ ಧಧ ಸಾ ಧಧ, ಪ ಪ ಗಾ ರಿ, ಸಾ, ಹೀಗೆ ಸ್ವರಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡು ರಾಗವಿಸ್ತಾರ ಮಾಡುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಧೈವತ ವಾದಿಸ್ವರವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಈ ರೀತಿ ದ್ವಿರುಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ತಾನಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸುವಾಗ ರಾಗಸ್ವರೂಪ ಸಹಜವಾಗಿಯೇ ಅಬಾಧಿತವಾಗಿ ಉಳಿಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ರಾಗದ ವೃತ್ತಿ ಉದಾತ್ತ, ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸೌಮ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಗಿರಿ ಕಂದರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತಪಸ್ಸನ್ನಾಚರಿಸುವ ಮುನಿಯೊಬ್ಬನು ಉದಯಿಸುವ ಸೂರ್ಯನಾರಾಯಣನಿಗೆ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಪೂರ್ವಕವಾಗಿ ಅಭಿವಾದನೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವ ಚಿತ್ರಣದಂತೆ ವಿಭಾಸರಾಗದ ಸ್ವರ ಸ್ವರೂಪವಿದೆ. ಈ ರಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಕ್ಷುದ್ರಾಲಂಕಾರಗಳು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

ಗಾ ಪ ಧ-ಪ ಗಾ ರಿ, ಸಾ ಇದು ರಾಗದ ಗುಂಜನ ಸ್ಥಾನ. ಸಾ ರಿ ಗಾ ಪ, ಧ, ಪ, ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಪ ಪ ಧಧ ಪ, ಗಾ ಧ ಪ, ಧ-ಗಾ ಪ; ಧಧ ಪ, ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ; ಪ ಧ, ಪ-ಧ-ಗ ಪ ಧ, ಸಾ-ರಿ, ಸಾ-ಧಧ ಪ-ಗಾ ರಿ ಸಾ ಹೀಗೆ ಈ ರಾಗದ ಚಲನವಿದೆ.

ತೀವ್ರ ಮಧ್ಯಮ, ತೀವ್ರ ಧೈವತ ಹಾಗೂ ತೀವ್ರ ನಿಷಾದ ಸ್ವರಗಳ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ ಇರುವ ವಿಭಾಸರಾಗವೂ ಒಂದಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಅದು ಅಷ್ಟೊಂದು ಪ್ರಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿಲ್ಲ. ವಿಭಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ತೀವ್ರ ಧೈವತ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೋ ಅಥವಾ ಕೋಮಲ ಧೈವತ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೋ ಎಂಬ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಭಿನ್ನಾಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಗಳಿವೆ. ಎರಡೂ ರೀತಿಯ ರಾಗಗಳು ಪ್ರಚಲಿತದಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

- ಮುಂದುವರೆಯುವುದು

ಅಧ್ಯಾಯ-4: ಮಹಿಳೆಯರ ಅಭಿನಯ ಲೋಕದೊಳಗಿನ ಅಲೋಕ

ಶೃಂಗಾರ-ಭಕ್ತಿಗಳ ದ್ವಂದ್ವದಾಟದಲ್ಲಿ ನೃತ್ಯಕಲಾವಿದೆಯರಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹುಮಂದಿ ಶೃಂಗಾರವೂ ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ರೂಪವೇ ಎನ್ನುವುದರತ್ತ ಒಲವನ್ನು ತೋರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆದರೆ ಕೆಲವರು ಆ ಶಬ್ದಗಳ ಸಾಂಪ್ರದಾಯಿಕ ಅರ್ಥವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಗಳನ್ನು ದಾಟಿ ಹೊಸತೊಂದು ಸ್ವಂತಿಕೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯವುಳ್ಳ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಕಂಡುಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದೂ ಉಂಟು. ಲೀಲಾ ಸ್ಯಾಂಸನ್ ಅಂಥವರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಬ್ಬರು. ಅವರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ 'ನಾಯಿಕಾ' ಎನ್ನುವುದೇ ಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಹೆಣ್ಣು-ಗಂಡುಗಳ ಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ನಾವು ಮನುಷ್ಯರು ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಬ್ಬರೂ ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಏನನ್ನಾದರೂ ಪಡೆಯಲು, ವಶದಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಅಥವಾ ದಕ್ಕಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಯಸುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಈ ಬಯಕೆಗಳು ಹಂಬಲಗಳಾಗಿ, ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆಗಳಾಗಿ, ಆಶಾಭಂಗಗಳಾಗಿ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಹತಾಶೆಗಳಾಗಿ ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಅವುಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಹೋರಾಡುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಈ ರೀತಿ ಸದಾ ಯಾವುದೋ ಒಂದನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ಪರಿತಪಿಸುವ ವಿಶ್ವಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಅರ್ಥದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಶೃಂಗಾರ ನಾಯಿಕೆ'ಯ ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆಯನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸುತ್ತಾರೆ ಲೀಲಾ ಸ್ಯಾಂಸನ್. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಇದನ್ನು ಹೆಣ್ಣು-ಗಂಡುಗಳ ಪ್ರೇಮ-ಕಾಮವೆಂದಷ್ಟೇ ನೋಡುವುದು ಅವರಿಗೆ ಸರಿಯೆನಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

'ಕೊನೆಗೂ ನಾವು ನಿಭಾಯಿಸಬೇಕಿರುವುದು ಭಾವನೆಗಳನ್ನೇ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಪರಂಪರಾಗತ ಅರ್ಥಗಳಿಗೇ ಅಂಟಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವ ಲೀಲಾ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಈ 'ನಾಯಿಕಾ' ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆಯನ್ನೇ ಸುತ್ತುವರೆದಿರುವ ಜೆಂಡರ್ ಅಂಶವು ಸ್ತ್ರೀಗೂ ಪುರುಷನಿಗೂ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕ, ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟ ಸ್ಥಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸುವ ವಿಷಯವಾಗಿ ಆತಂಕವಿಲ್ಲ. ಲಿಂಗವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಹುಟ್ಟಿಸುವ ಅರ್ಥಸೂಚನೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದರೆ ಇರಲಿ. ಆದರೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಭಾವವು ಕಾಯುವಿಕೆ, ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆಯೇ ಆಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆ ಒಂದು ಅನುಭವವು ಮನದಲ್ಲಿನ ಬಯಕೆಯನ್ನು ಉದ್ದೀಪಿಸಿ, ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸುವಂಥದು. ಇದು ಎಲ್ಲ ಮಾನವರ ಸಹಜ ಮನೋವ್ಯಾಪಾರವೇ ತಾನೆ? ನಮ್ಮ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಬದುಕಿನ ಕ್ರಮವನ್ನೇ ಇದು ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧಿಸುವಂತೆ ತಮಗೆ ತೋರುತ್ತದೆ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಲೀಲಾಸ್ಯಾಂಸನ್ (ಸಿ.ಎಸ್.ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ: ಮಿರರ್ಸ್ ಅಂಡ್ ಗೆಸ್ಟರ್ಸ್)

ಭರತನಾಟ್ಯದಂಥ ಅಭಿಜಾತ ಕಲೆಯು ಕೇವಲ ಲೌಕಿಕ ರೀತಿಯ ಅರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧೀಕರಿಸುವಂಥದಲ್ಲ. ಅದರದೇನಿದ್ದರೂ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮವೂ ಸೂಚ್ಯವೂ ಆದ ವಿಧಾನವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ದೈನಂದಿನ ಆಗುಹೋಗುಗಳ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ-ಲೌಕಿಕ ವಿಷಯಗಳ ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧೀಕರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಚಲನಚಿತ್ರಗಳು, ನಾಟಕಗಳು, ಬೀದಿ ನಾಟಕಗಳು ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಪತ್ರಿಕಾಕರ್ತರೂ ವೃತ್ತಾಂತಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳೂ ಮಾಡುವ ತರಹದ ಕೆಲಸವನ್ನೇ ಭರತನಾಟ್ಯವೂ ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂದೇಕೆ ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸುತ್ತೀರಿ? ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಕಲೆಗೂ ಅದರದೇ ಆದ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯವಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಭರತನಾಟ್ಯದ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ಅದರಲ್ಲಿನ ಅರ್ಥವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಅದು ಒಂದು ಸಾಗರ. ಅದರ ಅಭಿನಯ ಶೈಲಿಯ ಒಳಗಡೆಯೇ ಬೇಕಾದಷ್ಟು ಸ್ಕೋಪ್ ಇರುವುದರಿಂದ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಿಂದ ಅಂತಹ ಅಂಶಗಳನ್ನೇ ಎಳೆದು ತಂದು ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಜೋಡಿಸಿ ಹೊಸ 'ಆವಿಷ್ಕಾರ' ಎಂದು ತೋರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾದ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಜೀವನದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಜನ ಬಂದು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆ ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳು ಶಾಶ್ವತವಾಗಿ ಉಳಿದಿರಬೇಕಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೂ ಕೆಲವು ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳು ಒಂದು ಅಥವಾ ಹಲವು ಅನುಭವಗಳ ಮಧುರ ನೆನಪುಗಳು ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಅಂಥ ಮಧುರ ನೆನಪುಗಳ ಆ ಒಂದು ಗಳಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿದು ಕೊಡಲು ಒಂದು 'ಪದ' ಅಥವಾ 'ಜಾವಳಿ' ಒಂದು ರೂಪವಷ್ಟೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಲೀಲಾ ಸ್ಯಾಂಸನ್ ಅವರ ವಿಚಾರಗಳು ಪರಂಪರೆಯಿಂದ ತಮ್ಮದೇ ಆದ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಅಭಿನಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡ ರೀತಿಯನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುವುದೇ ಹೊರತು, ಪರಂಪರೆಗೇ ಹೊಸ ಅರ್ಥ ಮೂಲಗಳನ್ನು ತಂದು ಸೇರಿಸಿ ಅದನ್ನೇ

ಸಮಕಾಲೀನತೆಗಾಗಿ ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ಆಸಕ್ತಿ ಇಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅವರ ವಿಚಾರಗಳೇ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಪಡಿಸುತ್ತವೆ.

ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಬೇರುಗಳನ್ನೇ ಆಧಾರವಾಗಿ ಇರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡರೂ ಅಭಿನಯದ ಇತರ ಕಲಾಮಾರ್ಗಗಳಿಂದ ಬೇಕಾದ್ದನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿ ಹೊಸತೊಂದು ಅರ್ಥವಿನ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸುವ ಯಾವ ರೀತಿಯ innovation ಗಳನ್ನು ಲೀಲಾ ಅವರು ಅನಗತ್ಯ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೋ ಅಂಥದೇ ಹೊಸ ಆವಿಷ್ಕಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲತೆಯ ಅರ್ಥವಿದೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಾ ಅವರ ವಿಚಾರಗಳು ಲೀಲಾ ಅವರದಕ್ಕೆ ತದ್ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಜಾಗದಿಂದ ಹೊಮ್ಮುತ್ತವೆ. ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಿ ಅವರಿಗೆ ನೃತ್ಯಕಲೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ದೇಹಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ ತಾವು ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಒಂದು ಶೋಧನೆ. ಆ ದೇಹದ ಒಳಹೊಕ್ಕು ಅವರ ಕೇಂದ್ರವಾದ ಬೆನ್ನುಮೂಳೆ/ಬೆನ್ನುಹುರಿಯನ್ನು ತಲುಪುವುದೇ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಗುರಿ. ದೇಹವನ್ನು ಅದರ ವಿಕೇಂದ್ರಿತ ನಿಲುವುಗಳು, ಚಲನೆಗಳಿಂದ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆಗೊಳಿಸಿ ಸರಿಯಾದ ನಿಲುವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಲ್ಲಿಸುವುದೇ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬು. ಆ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬು ತನ್ನದೇ ಭಾಷೆಯನ್ನು ಆಡಲು ಬಿಡಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಿ. ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅವರು ತಂತ್ರಧರ್ಮದ ಆಕೃತಿಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸಗಳಿಂದಲೂ 'ಶಕ್ತಿ' ಎಂಬ ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಯೋಗಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದಿಂದಲೂ, ಯುದ್ಧಕಲೆಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಅನೇಕ ವಿಚಾರಗಳನ್ನು ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡು ನೃತ್ಯರೂಪದ ತಂತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಬದಲಿಸದೆಯೇ ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟ ಕಥನವೊಂದನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಸೂಕ್ತರೀತಿಯಿಂದ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಆಕೆ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರೆ.

'ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ' 'ಪುರುಷ' ತತ್ವಗಳನ್ನು ಸಾಹಜಿಕ ತಂತ್ರಪದ್ಧತಿಯ ನೆಲೆಯಿಂದ ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಾ 'ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ' ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಲಿಂಗಾತೀತ ನೆಲೆಯದು. ಒಬ್ಬ ಪುರುಷನೂ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯಾಗಬಹುದಾದ ಒಂದು ಅವಸ್ಥೆಯಾಗಿ ಅದು ಸರ್ವವ್ಯಾಪಿಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸ್ತ್ರೀತ್ವ ಎಂಬುದರ ಉದ್ದೇಶ ಅಥವಾ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನ ಸಂತಾನೋತ್ಪಾದನೆಯೇ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅವರು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. "ಜೀವನದ ಗುರಿ ಎಂದರೆ ಆತ್ಮಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕಾರ. ನನ್ನ ಈ ಸ್ವಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕಾರದ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯು ನಿಸರ್ಗದ ಉದ್ದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಎಂದು ಅನ್ನುವುದಾದರೆ, ಆ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನಾನು ಖಂಡಿತ ಆ ನಿಸರ್ಗದ ಜೊತೆ ಇಲ್ಲ." ಎಂದು ಅವರ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ ವಿಚಾರ.

ವಿಶಾಲವಾದ ಜಾಗತಿಕ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದ ಓದು, ಪರಂಪರಾಗತ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ, ಚಿತ್ರಕಲೆಯ ಪರಿಣತಿ, ಕಾವ್ಯ ರಚನೆಯ ಆಸಕ್ತಿ-ಹೀಗೆ ಹಲವು ಆಯಾಮಗಳುಳ್ಳ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಾ ಅವರು ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ತಳಹದಿಯ ಮೇಲೆಯೇ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಅರ್ಥ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಗಳನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ನೃತ್ಯರೂಪಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದಾಕೆ. ಒಬ್ಬ ನೃತ್ಯಕಲಾವಿದೆ ತನ್ನ ದೇಹವನ್ನು ಹೇಗೆ ನೋಡಬೇಕು ಎಂಬುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಿಂದ ಕಲ್ಪಿತವಾದ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಗಿಂತ ಭಿನ್ನವಾಗಿ ಇಂದು ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಏನಾದರೂ ಆಗಿದೆಯೆ ಎಂಬ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗೆ ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಾ ನೀಡುವ ಉತ್ತರ ತುಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವತ್ತಾದದ್ದು:

ತುಂಬ ಹಿಂದೆ ಧರ್ಮವು ನೃತ್ಯದ ಮೂಲ ಪ್ರೇರಣೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾಗ ನರ್ತಕಿಯ ದೇಹವು ಒಂದು ನೈವೇದ್ಯವೆನ್ನಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನೆ, ಧ್ಯಾನ, ಉಪಾಸನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ದೇಹವು ಒಂದು ಮಾಧ್ಯಮವಾಯಿತು. ಸ್ವತಃ ನರ್ತಕಿಯೂ ಅದನ್ನು ನಂಬಿದ್ದಳು. ಆ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯನ್ನೇ ಸತ್ಯವೆಂದು ತೋರಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅವಳು ಬದುಕಬೇಕಿತ್ತು. ಆ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ನೆಲೆಯಿಂದ ಸರಿದು ನೃತ್ಯವು ಒಂದು ಮನೋರಂಜನೆ ಸಾಧನವಾದಾಗ ಅವಳ ದೇಹವು ಇನ್ನೊಬ್ಬರನ್ನು ಸಂತೋಷಪಡಿಸುವ, ಸುಖಪಡಿಸುವ ಸಾಧನವಾಯಿತು. ಹೀಗೆ ಸುಖವನ್ನು ದೊರಕಿಸುವ ಉಪಕರಣವೆಂದು ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ದೇಹವನ್ನು ನೋಡುವ ಕ್ರಮವೇ ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲದಿಂದ ರೂಢಿಯಾಗಿ ಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರೂ ತಮ್ಮ ದೇಹಗಳಿಂದಲೇ ಸಂತಸವನ್ನು ಹೊಮ್ಮಿಸಬಲ್ಲೆವೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದರು. ಆದರೆ ಪರಿಶುದ್ಧವಾದ ಆನಂದವನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಲು ದೇಹವೇ ಒಂದು ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲವೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಕಾಣದೆ ಹೋದರು. ಈ ಗೊಂದಲದಿಂದ ಹೊರಬರಲು ಇನ್ನೂ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರಿಗೆ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಒಂದು ಸರಕಾಗಿ,

ದೇಹವು ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಬೇಕಾದ ವಸ್ತುವಾಗಿ ಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ದೇಹದ ಬಗೆಗಿನ ಪರಿಗ್ರಹಿಕೆ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಲೇ ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ದೇಹದೊಳಗೇ ಇರುವಂಥ ಸ್ಪೇಸ್‌ಗಳು ಯಾವುವು? ಆ ಶಕ್ತಿಯ ನೆಲೆಗಳೆಲ್ಲಿವೆ? ಎನ್ನುವುದೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಒಟ್ಟು ಬದುಕಿನ ನಿರಂತರ ಹುಡುಕಾಟ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಚಂದ್ರಲೇಖಿ. ಈ ದೇಹದ ಜೊತೆ, ಸಮಾಜದ ಜೊತೆ, ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಂಡದ ಜೊತೆ, ಪರಿಸರದ ಜೊತೆಗಿನ ನಮ್ಮ ಸಂಬಂಧವೇನು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅರಿಯಲು ದೇಹದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ, ಜೀವನದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿ ಏನು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಈ ಶರೀರದ ಆತ್ಮಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕಾರವೇ ಒಂದು ಆಕರವಾಗಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಅವರು. (ಸಿ.ಎಸ್.ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ: ಮಿರರ್ ಅಂಡ್ ಗೆಸ್ಟರ್)

ಮಹಿಳೆಯ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಕಲಾಸಾಧನೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಮರ್ಯಾದೆಯ ಮುಸುಕಿನೊಳಗೇ ನಡೆಸಬೇಕಾದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ಇತ್ತು. ಇದೆ. ತಾವು ಕುಲೀನ ಮನೆತನದಿಂದ ಬಂದವರು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ತೋರ್ಪಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಲೇ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕಲಾಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾಲಿಡಬೇಕಿತ್ತು. ಹಾಗೆ ಕಲೆಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಗಂಭೀರ, ಮರ್ಯಾದೆ ಹೆಣ್ಣುಮಗಳಾಗಿ, ಜೀವನ ಕ್ರಮದಿಂದಲೂ ಬಾಹ್ಯವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವದಿಂದಲೂ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿಕೊಂಡರೇನೇ ಜನರ ಗೌರವಾದರಗಳು ಅವರಿಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿತ್ತು. ದೇವದಾಸಿ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಿದ್ದ ಎಂ.ಎಸ್. ಸುಬ್ಬುಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಅವರ ಅಸಾಧಾರಣ ಕಂಠಸಿರಿ, ಗಾಯನದ ಪರಿಶುದ್ಧತೆಗಳಿಂದಷ್ಟೇ ಜನರನ್ನು ಮಂತ್ರಮುಗ್ಧರನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರೆ? ಅಥವಾ ವಿವಾಹವಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಮಕ್ಕಳೊಂದಿಗನಾದ ಪತಿಯ ಎರಡನೆಯ ಸತಿಯಾಗಿ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಶುದ್ಧ ಸಹಧರ್ಮಿಣೀ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿದು ಬಾಳಿದ್ದರು ಮತ್ತು ಆ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಭಕ್ತಿ, ಶ್ರದ್ಧೆ, ನಿಷ್ಠೆಗಳು ಅವರ ಬಹಿರಂಗದ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಶೇಷ ವರ್ಚಸ್ಸನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದ್ದವು ಎನ್ನುವ ಅಂಶಗಳು ಕೂಡ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರು ಕಲಾವಿದೆಯಾದ ಹೆಣ್ಣೊಬ್ಬಳಿಗೆ ತೋರಿಸಿದ ಗೌರವದಲ್ಲಿ ಗೌಣವಲ್ಲ ಅಲ್ಲವೆ?

ಮರ್ಯಾದೆಯ ಅವಗುಂಠನ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ರೂಪವನ್ನೂ ತಾಳಬಲ್ಲದು. ಸಿದ್ಧೇಶ್ವರಿದೇವಿಯಂಥ ಮಹಾಕಲಾವಿದೆ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಗುರುಗಳ 'ಮಗ' ಎಂದೇ ಗುರುತಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು. ಹಾಗೆ ಮಗನಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಆ ಗುರುವು ತನ್ನ ಹೆಂಡತಿಯನ್ನು ಈಕೆಯ ರಕ್ಷಣೆಗೆ ಒಪ್ಪಿಸಿ ಸಂಚಾರಕ್ಕೆ ತೆರಳುವುದಿತ್ತು. ಕಲೆಯೇ ಪವಿತ್ರ ಎನ್ನುವ ನಂಬಿಕೆ ಅತಿರೇಕಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋದರೆ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕತೆ, ಸಂಭಾವಿತನ ಮೊದಲಾದವು ಈ ಕಲೆಯ ಪರಿಚಯೆಯ ಸರಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆದ್ಯತೆ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಪಿತೃಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯು ಇಂಥ ಎಲ್ಲ ಮಡಿ-ಮೈಲಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲೆಯನ್ನು 'ಪವಿತ್ರ'ವಾಗಿ ಉಳಿಸಿಡಲು ಹೇಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಗ ಅಪವಿತ್ರತೆಯ ಕಳಂಕಿತ ಜಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಇಂಥ ಕುರುಡು ನಂಬಿಕೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಮೊದಲು ಬಲಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಮಧುರೈ ಪೊನ್ನುತ್ತಾಯಿಗೆ ಗಂಡಸರ ವಾದ್ಯವೆನಿಸಿರುವ ನಾದಸ್ವರವನ್ನು ಕಲಿಯಲು, ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಉತ್ಸವಾದಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಹಬ್ಬಹರಿದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಮದುವೆ ಮುಂಜಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನುಡಿಸಲು ಯಾರಿಂದಲೂ ಅಡ್ಡಿಬಂದಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಆಕೆ ದೇವದಾಸಿ ಕುಟುಂಬದಿಂದ ಬಂದದ್ದೇ ಕಾರಣ. ಆದರೆ ಆಕೆಯ ಆಶ್ರಯದಾತ ಗಂಡನು ತೀರಿಹೋದಾಗ ಅವರ ವಿಧ್ಯುಕ್ತ ವಿಧವೆಯಂತೆ ಈಕೆ ಬದುಕಲು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿದಾಗ ವಿಧವೆಯೊಬ್ಬಳು ಮಂಗಳವಾದ್ಯವಾದ ನಾದಸ್ವರವನ್ನು ನುಡಿಸಬಾರದೆಂದು ಆಕೆಯ ಅವಕಾಶವನ್ನು ಕಸಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಯಿತು.

“ಸೂರ್ಯ ಹುಟ್ಟುವುದನ್ನೂ ನೋಡಲಿಲ್ಲ; ಚಂದ್ರ ಮಿನುಗುವುದನ್ನೂ ಕಾಣಲಿಲ್ಲ”

ಸಂಗೀತ, ನೃತ್ಯ, ವಾದ್ಯಾದಿ ಕಲೆಗಳು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗತ ಸಾಧನೆಯನ್ನು ಕೇಂದ್ರವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವಂಥವು. ಆದರೆ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿ ಅದರ ಸ್ವರೂಪದಿಂದಲೇ ಸಾಮೂಹಿಕ ಲಕ್ಷಣವುಳ್ಳದ್ದು. ರಂಗಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನುವುದು ಅನೇಕ ರೀತಿಯ ರಂಗಕರ್ಮಗಳ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನದಿಂದ, ಸಹಕಾರದಿಂದಲೇ ಸಂಭವಿಸುವಂಥದು. ಅಭಿಜಾತ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಗೆ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರನ್ನೂ ಸೇರಿಸಬೇಕು ಎಂದು ನಾಟ್ಯಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವು ಹಕ್ಕೊತ್ತಾಯಿಸಿತ್ತೆನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಹಿಂದೆಯೇ ಗಮನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಪಾತ್ರನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಯ ಆಚೆಗೆ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ರೀತಿ ಪ್ರವೇಶಾವಕಾಶ ಪಡೆದ ಸ್ತ್ರೀನಟವರ್ಗವನ್ನು

ಎಲ್ಲಿ ಇಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು? ಹೇಗೆ ನಡೆಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುತ್ತಿತ್ತು? ಅವರ ಜೀವನದ ಕ್ರಮ ಹೇಗಿರುತ್ತಿತ್ತು ಎಂಬ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಯೂ ನಮಗೆ ಸಿಗಲಾರದು. ಆದರೆ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ, ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕಾದಿ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಗಳು ಬದಲಾದ ಹಾಗೆ ಕ್ರಮಕ್ರಮವಾಗಿ ಮಹಿಳೆ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಗೆ ಬಾರದಿರುವಂತೆಯೇ ಹೇಗೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಯಿತೆನ್ನುವುದು ಕುತೂಹಲಕಾರಿ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ನಾಟ್ಯಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಸುಕುಮಾರ ಶೈಲಿಯ ಅಭಿನಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರೇ ಬೇಕಿತ್ತು. ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರು ಪುರುಷಪಾತ್ರಗಳನ್ನೂ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದುದುಂಟು. ದೇವತೆಗಳಂಥ ಸುಕುಮಾರ ಲಕ್ಷಣವುಳ್ಳ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರದೇ ನಾಟಕತಂಡಗಳೂ ಇದ್ದವು. ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಸೇನಾಪತಿ ಗೃಹಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಪುರಪ್ರಮುಖರ ಮನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರೇ ಪುರುಷಪಾತ್ರಗಳನ್ನೂ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವಂಥ ನಾಟ್ಯಗಳು ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿತವಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದುದಕ್ಕೂ ನಾಟ್ಯಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚನೆ ದೊರೆಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಸ್ತ್ರೀನಾಟಕ ತಂಡಗಳಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಅರಮನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಣಿಯರೂ ಇತರ ಅಂತಃಪುರ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರೂ ನಾಟಕಾಭಿನಯ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು (ಎಂ.ಎಚ್. ಕೃಷ್ಣಯ್ಯ; ರಂಗಭೂಮಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆ: ಪು. 14)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಅನೇಕ ರಾಜರ ರಾಣಿಯರು ನಾಟಕಾಭಿನಯ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದುದರ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಗಳಿವೆ. ಚಾಲುಕ್ಯ ಜಗದೇಕಮಲ್ಲನ ರಾಣಿಯರಾದ ಮಹಾದೇವಿ, ರೂಪಾದೇವಿಯರು ಸೀತೆ, ರಾಮರ ಪಾತ್ರವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು ಎಂಬ ನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಇದೆ. ಹೊಯ್ಸಳ ಬಿಟ್ಟಿದೇವ (ವಿಷ್ಣುವರ್ಧನ)ನ ಮಹಾರಾಣಿ ಶಾಂತಲೆ ವಿಚಿತ್ರ ನರ್ತನವನ್ನು ಪ್ರವರ್ತನೆ ಮಾಡಿದವಳು. ಸೋಮಾಲಾದೇವಿ ಎಂಬಾಕೆ ಜಡಬೊಲ್ಲಕ, ಕಂಚುಕ, ದುಕೂಲ, ಚಲ್ಲಣಗಳನ್ನು ಧರಿಸಿ ಸಿಂಬಿಸಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡು ನಾಟಕವಾಡಲು ಬಂದದ್ದರ ವರ್ಣನೆಯಿದೆ. ರಾಜರ ಉಪಪತ್ನಿಯರೂ ಗಣಿಕೆಯರೂ ಪರಿಚಾರಿಕೆಯರಿಗೆ ನಾಟಕ, ನೃತ್ಯ, ಸಂಗೀತಗಳನ್ನು ಕಲಿಸುವುದು ಅವರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕ್ರಮದ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿತ್ತು. (ಎಂ.ಎಚ್. ಕೃಷ್ಣಯ್ಯ; ಪೂರ್ವೋಕ್ತ ಪು. 15-16)

ಕ್ಲಾಸಿಕಲ್ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ನಾಟಕದ ಅವನತಿಯ ಬಳಿಕ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಕಾಲದ ಶಿಷ್ಟರೂಪದ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಗಳು ದೇಶದ ವಿವಿಧ ಭಾಷಾ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತಲೆಯೆತ್ತುವವರೆಗಿನ ನಡುವಿನ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾರತದ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯನ್ನು ಜೀವಂತವಾಗಿ ಉಳಿಸಿಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಬಹುಶಃ ಜಾನಪದ ಕಲಾರೂಪಗಳು. ಚಾರಣರಂಥ ಕಥಕರ ಮೂಲದಿಂದ ಕಥನ ವಿಧಾನದ ನಾಟಕಗಳು ರೂಪುತಳೆದಿರಬೇಕು. ಪುರಾಣಗಳು, ವೀರಗಾಥೆಗಳು, ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಉತ್ತರ ಭಾರತದ ರಾಜರ ಆಸ್ಥಾನ, ಸಂಸ್ಥಾನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯವಾಗಲು ಚಾರಣರು ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ರಾಜರ ಯೋಧರ ಸಾಹಸ ಗೀತೆಗಳ ಗಾಯಕರು, ಮದುವೆ ಮುಂತಾದ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಯಾ ವಂಶಾವಳಿಯ ಕಥೆ ಹಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಸಂಗೀತಗಾರರು, ಹಾಡು, ನರ್ತನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರು ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕೆಲಸ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ನಾಚ್ ವರ್ಗದವರು ಮುಂತಾದ ವಿವಿಧ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಕೆಳಸ್ತರದವರ ಕಾಣಿಕೆ ಕಲೆಗಳ ತಾಳಿಕೆ ಬಾಳಿಕೆಗೆ ಸಂದಿದೆ. ಇವರಾರೂ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಸಮಾಜದಲ್ಲಿ ಗೌರವ, ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠೆಗಳಿದ್ದವರಲ್ಲ; ಜೀವನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ವೇಶ್ಯಾ ವೃತ್ತಿಗೂ ಇಳಿಯುವ ಕಲಾವಂತೆಯಿರವರು.

ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪಂಥಗಳು ಪ್ರಾಬಲ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಬರುವುದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ದೇಗುಲ-ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣಗಳು ಹೇರಳವಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆದವು. ಅದರೊಂದಿಗೇ ದೇವದಾಸಿ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯೂ ವ್ಯಾಪಕವಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆಯಿತು. ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಉತ್ಸವಾಚರಣೆಗಳ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿಯೇ ಬೇರೂರಿದ ದೇವದಾಸಿ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಚಿಕ್ಕ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನಿಂದಲೇ ದೇವರ ಸೇವೆಗೆ ಮೀಸಲು ಇಟ್ಟು ಸಂಗೀತ, ನೃತ್ಯಗಳ ಕಲಿಕೆಗೆ ಏರ್ಪಾಡುಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕವಾಗಿ ಈ ಪದ್ಧತಿ ಸ್ವೀಕೃತವಾಗಲು ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಆ ಜನರ ಬಡತನವೂ ಕಾರಣವಿದ್ದಿತು. ದೇವಸ್ಥಾನದ ಬಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ವಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಕಾಶ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿ, ಕರರಹಿತ ಜಮೀನು ನೀಡಿ ಪೋಷಿಸಲು ರಾಜರ ಕುಮ್ಮಕ್ಕು, ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ರಾಜಪುರುಷ ವರ್ಗ, ಪಾಳೆಗಾರರು, ಶ್ರೀಮಂತರು ಮತ್ತು ಅವರ

ಕೃಪಾಪೋಷಿತರಾದ ಪುರೋಹಿತ ವರ್ಗ ಇವರೆಲ್ಲರ ಸ್ವಾಮ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ದೇವದಾಸಿಯರು ಒಳಪಡಬೇಕಿತ್ತು.

ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲೇ ಶಿಷ್ಟ ಜನರ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರು ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿ ಪಾಲಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಪರದಾ (ಅವಗುಂಠನ) ಪದ್ಧತಿ ತೀವ್ರವಾದಂತೆ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರು ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಲು ನಿರ್ಬಂಧಗಳು ಹುಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡವು. ನಾಟ್ಯಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ನಿಯಮಕ್ಕೆ ಇದು ವಿರುದ್ಧವೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದರೂ ಮಧ್ಯಯುಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂಥ ನಿಷೇಧಗಳೇ ಪ್ರಾಬಲ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದವು. ನೈತಿಕತೆ, ಶೀಲದ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿಟ್ಟು ಸ್ತ್ರೀಪಾತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಗಂಡಸರು ಅಥವಾ ಬಾಲಕರೇ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸುವುದು ಪ್ರಚಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಿತು. ಹತ್ತನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪಂಥದ ಪುನರುತ್ಥಾನದ ಬಳಿಕ ಎರಡು ಮೂರು ಶತಮಾನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರನ್ನು ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರದೂಡಲಾಯಿತೆಂದು ಹೇಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ನಟಿಯರನ್ನು ಕೀಳಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುವುದು ಆರಂಭವಾದದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ದೇವದಾಸಿ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯ ಫಲವಾಗಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ತೊಡಗಿದ ಅನೈತಿಕ ವ್ಯವಹಾರಗಳೂ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿರಬೇಕು. ಭಕ್ತಿಪ್ರಧಾನ ನೃತ್ಯ ನಾಟಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸದಂತೆ ಈ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಬಂಧಿಸಲಾಯಿತು. (ಎಂ.ಎಚ್. ಕೃಷ್ಣಯ್ಯ: ಪು. 19-21)

ಮಧ್ಯಯುಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಬಲ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದ ಸ್ವತಿಕಾರರ ನೀತಿ ನಿಯಮಾವಳಿಗಳ ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರನ್ನು ಪುರುಷರಿಗಿಂತ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಇರಿಸಲಾಯಿತಲ್ಲದೆ ಹೆಣ್ಣಿನಕ್ಕೇ ಅಪವಿತ್ರತೆಯ ಕಳಂಕವನ್ನು ಹೊರಿಸಲಾಯಿತು. ಅಪವಿತ್ರರಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರ ಪ್ರವೇಶವು ಕಲೆಯ ಪಾವಿತ್ರ್ಯವನ್ನೂ ಕೆಡಿಸಿಬಿಡುವುದನ್ನುವ ಭೀತಿಯು ಬೆಳೆಯಿತು. ವೇಶ್ಯೆಯರಿಗೆ, ದೇವದಾಸಿಯರಿಗೆ, ರಾಜನರ್ತಕಿಯರಿಗೆ (ತವೈಫ್) ಕಲೆಗಳೇ ಕುಲವೃತ್ತಿ ಆಗಿದ್ದುದರಿಂದ ಗೌರವಸ್ಥ ಮನೆಗಳ ಹೆಂಗಸರು ಈ ಕಲೆಗಳ ಕಲಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಕುಲಗಟ್ಟು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆನ್ನುವ ಮರ್ಯಾದಸ್ಥರ ಭೀತಿಯೂ ತೀವ್ರವಾಯಿತು. ಹೀಗೆ ಎರಡೂ ರೀತಿಗಳಿಂದ ಪಾವಿತ್ರ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ನೈತಿಕತೆಗಳ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರು ಒಟ್ಟಾರೆಯಾಗಿ ಕಲೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಎರವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಆಯಿತು.

ಒಂದೆರಡು ಶತಮಾನದಷ್ಟು ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯುಳ್ಳ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಭಾರತೀಯ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಗೆ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರ ಪ್ರವೇಶವಾದದ್ದು ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದ ಮೊದಲ ದಶಕಗಳಲ್ಲಷ್ಟೇ. ಆದರೆ ಇಂಥ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕಷ್ಟೇ ಸೀಮಿತವೇನೂ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಫ್ರಾನ್ಸ್ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಹದಿನಾರನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದವರೆಗೂ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರಿಗೆ ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬರಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಧ್ಯಕಾಲೀನ 'ಮಿಸ್ಟರಿ ಪ್ಲೇ'ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 'ವರ್ಜಿನ್' ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರನ್ನು ಬಳಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದುದು ಇತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ನೆರೆಯ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರವಾದ ಸ್ವೀಡನ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಜವಾದ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರೇ ವರ್ಜಿನ್ ಪಾತ್ರ ವಹಿಸಿದರೆ ಆ ಪಾತ್ರದ ಪಾವಿತ್ರ್ಯವೇ ಕಳೆದುಹೋಗುವುದೆಂದು ಅದಕ್ಕೂ ಅವಕಾಶ ನೀಡುತ್ತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. (ಜೂಡಿತ್ ಗ್ರೇವ್ಸ್ ಮಿಲ್ಲರ್ : ಫೆಮಿನಿಸ್ಟ್ ಥಿಯೇಟರ್ ಅಂಡ್ ಥಿಯರಿ ಪು. 246)

ಪಿತೃಪ್ರಧಾನ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಸಂಬಂಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಂಥ ಅನೇಕ ಕ್ರೂರ, ಹೀನ ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆಗಳ ವಿಸ್ತಾರವಾದ ಬಲೆಯ ನಡುವಿನಿಂದಲೇ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯ ಪ್ರವೇಶವಾಯಿತು. ಅದೇ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯ ಅಂಕಿಯೊಳಗೆ ಇದ್ದುಕೊಂಡೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಕಲಾಸಾಧನೆಗೂ ಶ್ರಮಿಸುವ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯತೆ ಇತ್ತು. ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಈ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚೇನೂ ಬದಲಾಗಿಲ್ಲ; ಆಳುವ ಶಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಸ್ವರೂಪ, ನಿಯಂತ್ರಣ ವಿಧಾನಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮವೂ, ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣವೂ ಆಗಿವೆಯಷ್ಟೆ. ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕವಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದ ಶಿಷ್ಟರಂಗಕಲೆಯು ದೇಶದ ವಸಾಹತುಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನದೇ ಆದ ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟ ರೂಪ, ಲಕ್ಷಣಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಹೊಮ್ಮಿಬಂದಿದ್ದು ಅದನ್ನು ಸಾಂಪ್ರದಾಯಿಕ 'ವೃತ್ತಿರಂಗಭೂಮಿ' ಎಂದು ಗುರುತಿಸುವುದು ರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. 1950ರ ದಶಕದಿಂದ ಮುಂದೆ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಆಧುನಿಕ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿ 'ಹವ್ಯಾಸಿ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿ' ಎಂದು ಅಂಕಿತಗೊಂಡಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

- ಮುಂದುವರೆಯುವುದು

Chintalapalli Venkata Rao

From “Murali Vani”, Sri B V K Sastry Felicitation Volume

As the illustrious ruler of a model State, the late Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV of Mysore was a great patron of the arts. His tastes were judicious and catholic. Though fond of Karnatak music, he had equal appreciation for Hindustani music. He was not averse to Western music either.

And it was before this connoisseur of music that Chintalapalli Venkata Rao made an enduring impact one evening. In fact, Venkata Rao’s concert that day was a revelation to many of the rasikas and vidwans assembled at the court. Especially his exposition of Todi and the celebrated kriti of Tyagaraja, “Endukudayaradura”, perfectly set off the challenging mood of the composition. The exposition of the raga was virile and full-blooded and had no subtle frills. While improvising the passage of “jagela” in the kriti, Venkata Rao’s well-modulated voice left a profound impact. The same dynamism was also apparent in another kriti of Tyagaraja, “Evarura”, in Mohanam, reflecting a similar mood of challenge and despondence.

Not content with the first recital, the Maharaja had another scheduled for the following evening, and enjoyed the music of Venkata Rao for an equal duration, conferring on him the title of “Sangitaratna”. In fact, following these recitals, the Maharaja, it is said, sought to know where this “jewel” had been hiding all these years. His officers and vidwans could provide no immediate answer. And the “jewel” itself has another story to tell.

New pastures

In his early days, when Venkata Rao was carving for himself a niche in the musical world, he longed to try his luck at the Mysore Durbar, like so many up-and-coming musicians of the day. Accordingly, he made the long journey to Mysore and awaited his opportunity. But he was no match for the perfumed politics of the Princely Court and had indefinitely to cool his heels. That was enough for the spirited young man. After waiting for a reasonable period, he returned home, in a huff, and swore that he would never visit Mysore again! He then set his sight on new pastures-in the Rayalaseema, coastal Andhra, Hyderabad and even up north, being pre-eminently successful as a concert artiste. He decided to return to Mysore only after a special messenger, sent at the instance of Muthiah Bhagavathar, told him that he had been invited to perform before the Maharaja.

Some of the incidents and personalities connected with his career, as recalled by Chintalapalli, are so remote that they have

almost passed into history. Yet Venkata Rao, even in the evening of his life (he is rising 92), seems to have retained his old fire. In fact his very looks--the ebony complexioned tall figure with a slight stoop and the lush white moustache for contrast and the deep voice--seem to proclaim more of an old warrior than a musician.

Chintalapalli Venkata Rao hails from a family of musicians whose roots go deep to the heyday of Vijayanagar: there are records at least to prove that these were strong during the times of the Bahamani Sultans. Thus music is in his blood. Born and brought up in such a congenial musical atmosphere, it is no wonder that Venkata Rao distinguished himself, like some of his illustrious ancestors. His formative years were spent at home under the direction of Pakka Hanumanthachar of Penukonda. He also served a period of apprenticeship with Hangal Chidambarayya.

Chintalapalli, in more than one way, belongs to the sishyaparampara of Tyagaraja. Chidambarayya was a disciple of Mysore Sadasiva Rao, the famous composer who in turn studied under Walajapet Venkataramana Bhagavathar, the direct disciple of Tyagaraja. Apart from this, Venkata Rao also served under Neyakkarpatti Sesha Iyer, who was the son of Neyakkarpatti Subba Iyer, a disciple of Tyagaraja.

“I was in my later teens” said Venkata Rao, recalling how he came into Sesha Iyer’s orbit. “Some of us, his pupils, lived in a room in Chayamma Temple, at Hindupur. Early one day, we were practising a pallavi - Dorakuna dora nedu nee samukhamu’ - in Todi. Each of us was improvising it as best as we could. But, at one stage, there arose a dispute about the aptness of some prayoga. And in the verbal exchanges that followed, even though my stand was correct, I was all but overwhelmed by the aggressive attitude of the others.

“The matter seemed on the point of erupting into violence, when suddenly the door flew open and an elderly gentleman entered the room. His stare itself was such that it froze us into silence. And when he asked us to sing the pallavi, one by one, we obeyed without demur. After listening to each one of us, he looked at me and bade me follow him out. There he said: ‘Son, I overheard your exchanges and could see that your stand was right. But I did not want to take sides. Now, I have reassured myself and advise you strictly to follow the sampradaya in the face of all odds. If you want my help at any time, you may come to me.’”

And Venkata Rao, for his part, did not hesitate to seek Sesha

Iyer's guidance, spending a most rewarding time with him.

“There is no point in discussing the subject,” said Venkata Rao, emphatically, when I questioned him about the tone and texture of the music prevailing in his heyday. “Especially when it is beyond the comprehension of the present generation, whose ears are attuned to a more mellow form of music. My sruti, for instance, was white four (F); also, the music concerts of those days were not packed with som many kritis. Just a couple of kritis were rendered, more in the nature of warming up the musician and the atmosphere. The accent was more on the raga its detailed exposition set off by manodharma. The tanam and the pallavi would be equally expansive, with the attention of the musician concentrated on the pallavi, where he brought into full play his skill, his mastery of technique, his sensitivity to the bhava and rasa of the music. He virtually revelled in these, and the audience, too, was highly responsive to such artistic aspects of music. I could happily indulge in pallavis with sixteen kalas to a bar.

Lost vitality

“Such music, I am afraid, will be incongruous in the current context. I do not blame anyone for this, because people at any time cultivate and develop an art according to their capacity. I need not be misunderstood if I go so far as to say that the young man of today is not as strong and as virile as the young man of my times. Consequently, he has to develop the art more in tune with his temperament and energy. Naturally, therefore, his music is more mellow-in fact, I should not look for that vitality in his art which prevailed in my day. For, even if he wants to infuse it, where is the lung power and energy to control the breath?

“These diluting influences apart, I must say that I miss another important aspect of the art: bhava. It was in those days given as much attention as technique. And my gurus were noted for the clear enunciation of the word and for making it meaningful, imbuing it with the rasabhava of the raga. ‘Our music should evoke the sentiments and feelings inherent in the kriti even in the lay listener, otherwise that music is purposeless,’ they used to say.”

Though Chintalapalli speaks about present-day music, particularly the low sruti and the more mechanical way of singing, with obvious disapproval, he does not complain. “I find the musician today to be more clever and better informed than was the case in our days. But this has not helped the growth of any real art. “he points out.

-Published in Illustrated Weekly of India, 1966

**Interaction with founder, Hamsakutiram,
Dr Geetha Bhat – Centre for Music Education,
Psychology and Research**

Aparna Shivapura in conversation with Dr Geetha Bhat.



Dr Geetha R. Bhat, is a musician, p s y c h o l o g i s t , Music Therapist, Writer, Researcher and Connoisseur, working tirelessly for the cause of Children with special needs and Persons with disabilities using Carnatic Classic

Music.

It is an Institution set up to build awareness and promotion of fine arts towards holistic health and enriching the society especially amongst the youth. The cause demonstrates the significance and advantages of classical music and its therapeutic effects on various types of disorders.

Dr Geetha says, “the challenge is greater during Covid19 times because the movement of the afflicted children and their families is restricted. Most of our initiatives involves a face-face or 1-1 interaction, wherein I intervene with music to ensure they are calm and relaxed. In addition, there are many children and families below poverty line who cannot afford a computer to access the online classes. There are multi-dimensional challenges, and we have to innovate solutions on-the-go.”

She has initiated a virtual program called ‘Karuna’, wherein she performs different concepts and healing ragas for the family and the afflicted children, strictly maintaining the privacy of institutions and NGOs she is closely associated with. This ensures there is something in store for the family to bond and watch together, also creating a platform for learning for the children.

She has also been leading the path in the Covid-times by providing learning material, presentations, teaching and visual aids on various life-skills, so they can be used to their advantage. This is a segment of individuals and families who are far more stressed, challenged and require assistance at every stage. Carnatic Classical Music plays a phenomenal role in aiding healing here.

She continues to adapt relaxation techniques through music to the individual's needs, and works through progressive succession, with her special needs students, and their families. Using music, she tries to build deep and intensive coping mechanisms. There is a blend of Classical Music, Yoga, Meditation, Comedy and Conversations which delivers the 'internal medicine' for these children.

In addition, she also has to empower the family and the entire ecosystem surrounding the client to ensure, there is no disturbance and the healing is effective. Most often, it is a harsh reality that the fathers abandon the family and the child is left with the mother. The mother goes through tremendous pressures especially dealing with children in the age of 12 – 24. She is designing exclusive programs for such mothers, as coping strategies.

Music Therapy uses all elements of music like rhythm, raga, and patterns to induce relaxation and calmness in the individual. She says, "Indian Classical music with its complex structure of the saptaswaras, form, shruthi, laya, raga, thala and with the fragrance of the ragas pervading through emotions or rasas can do wonders with not only us but also children and individuals with special needs. Each of these elements can be broken into their own individual patterns and frameworks within the massive construction of Classical music to derive a positive outcome. The combination of rasas with a true understanding of a raga's unique melodic patterning is the process through which music really becomes a method of transformation." The sessions also drive initiatives in developing concentration, focus and enhancing attention span in them. With dedicated and rigorous practice sessions included, this can definitely calm the continuously and aggressively disturbed mind, especially of younger children.

The Hamsakutira Foundation is doing yeoman's service in this regard and requires worldwide support to sustain this





initiative. They use Music Therapy to address the psychological and emotional needs of the children. “Music therapy is based on the understanding that the ability to respond to music is an inborn quality in all human beings. This ability usually remains unimpaired by impairments, injury or illness and is not dependent on musical training. In music therapy we work to achieve therapeutic aims by developing a musical relationship where emotions and thoughts can be expressed,” Dr Geetha says in Hamsakutira.

For more details on the initiatives, please visit <http://www.hamsakutira.in/>

There is not enough time, resources and methodologies to expediate this great humanitarian effort. There is far more support and backing required for this to be successful. More musicians need to come forward and teach the children with special needs. They need more music classes, more music sessions and healing. One music session, one music teacher and one raga will NOT suffice. The entire music fraternity needs to come forward to support Children with special needs and the disadvantaged, for whom, a few minutes of support ‘musically’ will make a valuable difference.



Beyond the stage

Guru. Dr. Lalitha Srinivasan

-Shilpa Nanjappa

*As artistes we often question ourselves on the purpose of our art. Why we pursue it; what it means to us; are we bound by it or does it free us; when are we deemed successful; who defines our success; etc. Most dancers base their artistry on stage performances and seldom get their hands into allied fields of art, let alone fields not related to art. Could it be the sense of familiar comfort that the stage gives a performer? Or a jumpacked schedule that leaves a performer with hardly any time to pursue much else? Or the daunting task of opening a few books and reading theoretical aspects? Of late, it has been a refreshing change to see more and more dancers looking towards the path of research and study to broaden their understanding of the artform, which brings in more intellectual dimensions to practical presentations as well. Kalasinchana brings you this series to throw light upon the works of various artistes, who looked beyond the stage and chose to tread a scholarly path, with the hope to inspire more artistes to follow suit. We are extremely thrilled to start this series with a pioneering artiste in more ways than one- **Guru. Dr. Lalitha Srinivasan.***



At a time when there was no internet, mobile phones or any other gadgetry that eases our lives today, Dr. Lalitha Srinivasan took on herculean task of connecting the history of Karnataka with the origins of Bharathanatyam. It takes just a couple of minutes while interacting with her to understand how passionate she is about Karnataka, its

people, Bharathanatyam, her roots and her undying thirst for knowledge. 'Huchchu' she says.. "Its my madness. . . I can't stop. It keeps me going and I keep unearthing more and more everyday!" One of the senior most dance Gurus of the state, Dr. Lalitha has meticulously trained scores of talents over decades at her NUPURA School of Bharathanatyam, with the most amazing outcome being, quite a few of them choosing to pursue research as well. Her humility and perseverance are truly inspirational. It's truly an honour to showcase how she went about this fruitful journey, in her own words.



My choice of topic, wasn't really chosen...

I did not pursue an academic learning for my Doctorate. It is an honorary one. I did my research work over 30 years ago- a time when it was relatively new to pursue academic research in dance. I worked on reconstructing the Suladhi Prabhanda, compositions peculiar to Karnataka,

which were prevalent between 14th to 17th century AD. I did not pursue this by choice. I was instructed to take it up, as it existed in the cultural mode of dancing throughout South India even before the advent of the Tanjore Quartet. Since it was common knowledge that the Quartet was responsible for stylizing Bharathanatyam into the format we see even today, I was intrigued to see that Karnataka's history held keys to stylized dancing much before that. This piqued my interest to find those connections.

I based my work of reconstruction on the text 'Sangeetha Darpana' of Damodara Panditha who wrote in 1620. *Suladies* come to us from the days of the Natya Shastra. The *salaga suda prabhanda* mentioned by Bharatha Muni changed into *Suladhi* Desi style of dancing based on the *Saptha talas* of the *Alankaras* of Carnatic music. Initially, hundreds of *Dasavarenyas* who lived during that period danced to the rhythm with their *eka thari* thamboora, castronauts (*chitike* or wooden symbols with bells attached) with devotional fervor.

But it entered the classical repertoire because of the stylization, tempo variation and rhythmic precision. The Desi *Utpluthi Karanas* and *Brahmaries* were mentioned in these compositions. Hand movements also created a rare and special vocabulary of their own. I had to study the Natya Shastra, Sangeetha Darpana, Sangeetha Ratnakara,



Nrityadhaya, Lasya Ranjana, etc to deduce the movements. Based on textual evidence, I reconstructed the movements and arrived at aesthetic *charies*, *bhramaries*, *lasyanga* and *kalasa*, the technical details included in the dance format. I still have to clarify some of them which I could not understand 30 years ago and I continue to realise them as I journey along to refine the *Suladi Prabandha*.

It is interesting to note that these *suladies* are still sung and danced in the *harikatha* format in several rural villages of Karnataka even to this day, but the performers don't necessarily know what those rhythm patterns are intended for or what deeper meanings these compositions hold. Only the classical dance format truly brings to life the intentions of these compositions.

Turns and tempos that made my journey what it is today....

Having received the Fellowship awarded by Human Resources Department in 1986, I furthered my study to reconstruct the *Suladi Prabandha* of Purandaradasa in Raga *Naata*, set to *Suladi Sapta talas*. I was certainly not aware of the *Suladi Prabandha* till Late Sri B V K Shastry informed me about this particular piece of classical music from the great glorious Vijayanagar period, which was the contribution of Haridasa to



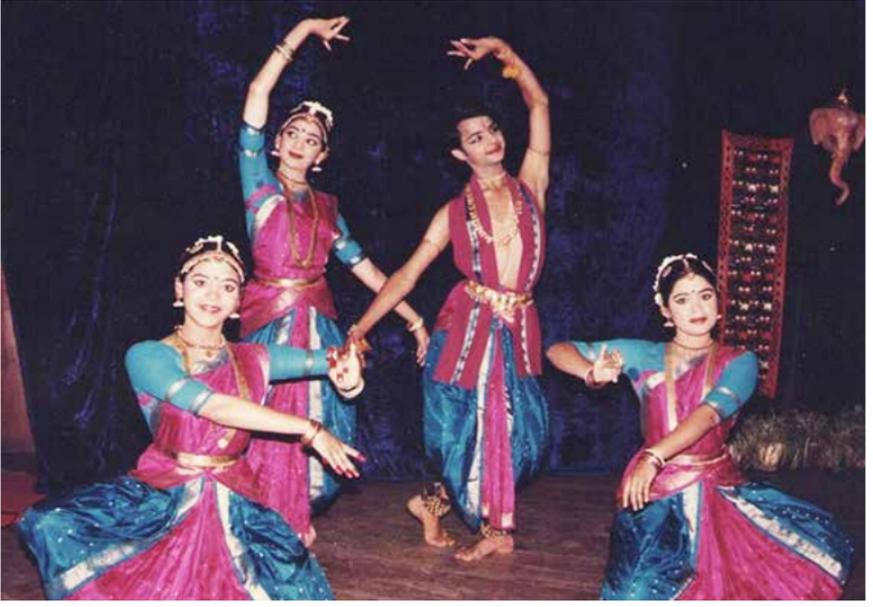
Carnatic music and later dance. I was helped by a Sanskrit teacher to make necessary notes and I put my students through the rigorous training of the *Shudda Paddathi*, which I named *Sulalitha Nritya*. I was also helped by Mahamahopadyaya Dr R. Satyanarayana in theoretical aspects and Dr. Shachi Devi and Smt. Sharada with singing the *Suladi Prabhanda*.

What it means to me and the whole dance fraternity now...

Though I did not realize it then, now as I go through the music and dance of *Suladi*, my feeling of amazement increases. It is not only a song or dance; it is the very core of Karnataka's people- their sentiments, language, culture, the prevalent Vaishnava Bhakti during Haridasa times and so much more. I am indeed blessed to have taken it up to realize, compose and propagate what belongs to our land. I believe I did it in a very small way. More people should take up these compositions which are profuse, running into thousands of songs. It portrays the identity of Karnataka. It needs to be propagated in order to throw more light on the dance history of Karnataka. Only then can historical events about the origin of Bharathanatyam itself be truly accredited.

A *Suladi* can replace a Varna in a Bharathanatyam performance, as we find suladies like *Kshetra Suladi*, *Alankara suladi*, *Shringara Youkta suladi*, *Vatsalyayoukta suladi*: with





moral, social, ethical norms and themes. I insist on the fact that there are rare repertoires in Karnataka apart from what we have borrowed from Tamilnadu. If dancers have the patience and interest to pursue it, they will indeed unearth a grand legacy of Karnataka's dance tradition. Actually, most of the south Indian dance forms took root during the great Vijayanagar period between 14th and 17th century. Unfortunately, due to the onslaught of Muslim invasion and the later British rule, we have lost so much. If dancers of Karnataka work towards this goal they will be richly rewarded and we can collectively feel proud of our state's grand legacy.



Guru Sri Tarun Kumar Singh Srividya Angara Sinha in conversation with Manipuri Guru Sri N Tiken Singh

Graceful, delicate and lyrical, the Manipuri dance form is one of the most fascinating dance styles of India. The fluid movements of the classical dance form, the raasleela and the pure muscle and rhythm of the Pung Cholom are truly a treat to the eyes. Ananya Kalasinchana takes delight in interviewing Guru Sri N Tiken Singh of the Manipuri classical dance form as he walks down memory lane reminiscing about his guru, Sangeet Natak Academy awardee Guru Sri Tarun Kumar Singh.



Guru N Tiken Singh, son of Padmasri and SNA awardee Guru N Ibemni, started out as a child artiste and traditional performer, and musician. His illustrious career spans over fifty years as a dance guru, researcher, scholar, and music director. A recipient of the Manipur State Akademi Award for Manipuri dance, Sri Tiken Singh has directed, and consulted on many national and international dance and music projects. Ananya Kalasinchana thanks SNA Yuva Puraskaar Awardee Sri Basu Sinam Singh, a student of Guru Tiken Singh for his support and collaboration in facilitating this conversation

Before we embark on the interview, could you tell us a few words about the Manipuri classical dance style? What are its origins, what is its musicality, what books and stories does it draw from?

The Manipuri classical dance form was established by some gurus. We've two religions in Manipur, one is pre-Hindu or the Maitei religion, and one is post-Hindu. Most elements of Manipuri have been carried from the Pre-Hindu art forms. In Manipur, there is a community theatre art form, which we call Lai-Haraoba. The classical dance as well as the Lai-Haraoba festival belong to the Maitei people, as they're the predominant community in Manipur. Literature, philosophy, dance, music, ritual, rites and martial arts etc are all part of the Lai-Haraoba, a festival that spans from as less as three days to a month or

more.

When the people of the valley embraced the Hindu religion, they came to be known as Manipuri Gaudiya Vaishnav. They followed the teachings of Gauranga Mahaprabhu of Bengal. In the second half of the 18th century, King Bhagyachandra adopted the doctrine of Gauranga Mahaprabhu but to his greatness, he chose to amalgamate the old culture of Manipur with the newly adopted philosophy of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. He started the raas-leela, took the stories from the ancient Hindu texts like Srimad Bhagavata purana, and designed the music and dance elements newly.

South-east Asia and Manipuri culture in fact are quite connected, for example with countries like Myanmar, Phillippines, Thailand etc. So the cultural foundation was very strong before the advent of Hinduism. This is the reason the aesthetic value of Manipuri is still alive though the religion changed. Which is also why the Manipuri dance is different from the other Hindu art forms of country. The philosophy is the same but the presentation is radically different.

As a student, when did you first start learning Manipuri, sir?

Me? So, my mother was a folksinger. The whole family was in fact artistic. My elder sisters are folk dancers. From my childhood, I accompanied them as drummer, singer, sometimes I played an instrument like flute. When the Lai Haraoba festival came, our house used to get converted to a school. Youngsters used to come to our house to learn dance from my sisters. My mother N Ibemni is a Padmasri and SNA awardee. She was also a choir singer during the reign of the last king Bodhachandra, then she became a balladeer or story-teller. So, the influence was really present from that time onwards.

I belonged to a poor family, so I had to go out to earn money. After some time, I joined the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipuri Dance Academy for a Diploma course, and it was during this time that I met Guru Tarun Kumar. In the dance academy, we mainly learnt the Raas leela, along with classical dance and even tribal dance forms. But unfortunately, the classical item was only one class comprising two compositions. Even now, there is no methodology of learning solo dance separately. The emphasis is more on Raasleela.

Gurus Shri Maisnam Amubi Singh, he was the pioneer of this classical solo dance. He had many students like my Guru Shri Tarun Kumar, Th Babu, Y Mahavir, L. Thambalngoubi, Tondon Devi, Devjani Chaliha, Guru RK Singhajit Singh etc. Guru Tarun Kumar had a very special characteristic, as

he developed the training methodology for Manipuri dance. He also wrote two books “First steps of Manipuri dance” and “Nritta Rasika”. He discussed about Manipuri in the pravesika, he developed a special set of exercises and a dancer who could master these would be capable of learning the dance in a short amount of time.

Some disciples of Tarun Kumarji are working in Shantiniketan, one of whom is a professor and one an associate professor. They currently use his methodology to train students.

So you met your Guru at the academy. How was he like?

Yes, we met at the dance academy. 1976 was when I joined. My guru was very reticent. Spoke very less. He introduced two dance pieces, one is easier, one is slightly tougher. The difficult one, no one wanted to learn that. But I wanted to learn it.



Whether I'm able or not, I didn't care, I wanted to dance that piece. He said I was walking the arduous path, because that piece wasn't really about performance. It was quite philosophical. Somehow, I learnt it.

Then with my colleagues, we founded the Progressive Artists Laboratory, and requested Guruji to accept the role of President of this organization. We started working from 1977 onwards with Guruji and within one or

two years, many young girls and boys came to our organization to get trained. But we didn't have a place of our own, we had to take it for hire. Slowly, we established a complex. Guruji's view was to help us go further in a practical manner. He was very experienced, and his thought-processes guided us a lot.

I wanted to be a music director during that time, because my mother was a musician. I loved to compose music for dance. Though I joined the academy to learn dance practically, I'd sit down to play music to suit the dancer. My role changed to a music director.

Please tell us more about your guru.

Never were we told that what we were doing was good. When we also gained some experience and started training other students, some of them showed promise. One such student of ours, Raseshwori was a good dancer and we wanted guruji to see



this dancer's work. Once the dance ended, Guruji just got up and left, like he always did. She was very hurt and started crying. Later when I visited him, I asked him quietly if he thought the student was good and that she was hurt because nothing was said.

Guruji remained quiet. After a while, he said "The moment you say 'good' to a student, you're ending his or her growth as an artist. If you have even a little affection towards your student and want to see them go far,

NEVER say 'good job' to them. You are not saying anything negative, no? You're just staying quiet".

Guruji then told me, "You at least want to become a music director, no? Then listen. Taal is the life of music, understand the concept of rhythm. Don't fall into the swirls of sur and raag, get an iron grip on taal! Taal and literature are interlinked. It is only when there is rhythm in poetry that the meaning registers in the reader's mind!" I was young then, I didn't quite understand his words, but as my age and experience grew, I understood what he said. It reverberates in my ears till date!

My guruji was 27 when he became a dancer, before that he was a percussionist. Because he had lost all his flexibility while playing the drum in Manipuri, he developed his own exercises that can help bring about a dancer's grace. He believed that every dancer must be equally strong on both the left and right sides and these set of exercises that he had devised supported that learning curve. The younger generation of dancers liked this very much. From a traditional point of view, women weren't allowed to show their feet. But guruji laid stress on the Manipuri footwork for women, what you see today was his effort.

There might have been many instances with your Guru that shaped your ideas and your personality for life, could you please share a few with us?

There is one beautiful instance that I can recall. The Manipuri new year Cheiraoba, that comes during February- March. On this day, we bow down to our parents, gurus and elders. One such Cheiraoba day, I took all my students and went to his place with a simple offering of a new dhoti. We presented it to him along with our pranaams. "What is this?", he asked. When I told him the reason, he said "I've never said that I am a guru. I'm



no guru.” Saying this, he fell silent and went back into the house. He brought out a photo of his guru Amubi. He placed the photo in front of us and started crying. “Till now, I’ve never announced the fact that I’m such and such a person’s student. The Guru is to be enshrined in the heart, then you will go forward in life. If you wish to use your guru’s name to further your career, that’s not good.” This he told me wagging his finger at me, I remember vividly.

In Manipuri choreographies like Yeh Sakhi Mohna, the music of which was set by Sri

Tarun Kumar. It is evident that he was adept in both dance and music. Is that the way the dance form is passed on as well? With a compulsory training in music?

Before the advent of Vaishnav dharma, the Sanskrit chantings and mantras were done by Bengali mahajans. The sankeertan tradition that we use in Manipur have also come from West Bengal. So people also enjoyed the language’s nuances though it was from another state. People did what they liked without getting into territorial issues. This Yeh Sakhi Mohna is by Sri Rai Vasant. My guruji was an expert at Bengali. He heard this from Rai Vasant ji and then took it to his own guruji. In his own Guru’s name, he presented the choreography.

About training in music along with dance, well, this organization dreams of doing it and has achieved that objective to an extent. Usually, the focus is more on dance at most places. But in Guruji’s school, if you couldn’t pick a song up with rhythm, then you aren’t taught the dance. It needn’t be sung as per the correct notes, but the rhythm has to be intact. The misfortune is that in the classical solo dance tradition, after the older gurus have passed on, the institutions are thinning down. General classes are held on raas, lai haraoba etc but not on classical dance.

There is some musical knowledge that I’ve, hence I try to pass it down through our organization. Even literature, there is focus in terms of trying to teach the meaning. As such, that which you cannot say in word, but can present through dance and music is kala. Art is the deepest thought that occurs in a person, and the entity that inspires it is literature. According



to my guru ji's training, this is the path that must be followed.

The tricky part of learning Manipuri is that mudras etc are not part of the Manipuri pedagogy. It is expression through the entire body. You've to push the energy to the very extremity. That is why it is a little difficult to pick up.

The vision your guru Sri Tarun Kumar had for Manipuri, do you think it is coming about today, happening today?

We do have a long way to go. The efforts are on always, and the journey promises to be fulfilling!

This reminds me of an incident though. Many years ago, we were given an opportunity to perform at a VIP program. There were a variety of pieces as part of that evening's repertoire – martial arts, Pung Cholom, raas, there was a variety. Guruji asked us "Which program is this?" We gave the details and slowly we kept getting into one rehearsal after another, one piece after another. We didn't practice the classical dance per se. We kept rehearsing these pieces only. Guruji said "What are you doing? Why are you wasting your time? Practice the classical, and you'll understand the precious core of the classical form! Your country's unity is in this form! Small regional movement forms cannot be termed classical. For something to be called that, it needs to have a characteristic that can reach out to the entire nation. It needs to have all the aesthetics. When thought is subjected to intense focus, it becomes 'shastreeya'. And classical art forms belong to that realm. We all turn to the shastras for guidance. If you see Kuchipudi and like something, take it but mould it to the Manipuri aesthetic! If you're a classical dancer,

till you die, you'll remain one!"

What words of wisdom as learnt from your guru and as a guru yourself, would you like to pass on to the current generation of Manipuri dancers?

As I said, Guru is to be enshrined within the heart. This person Tiken Singh (referring to himself), this is no guru. There is Eashwar inside of me. Everyone is associated with that spark of the Eternal.

You're teaching, but while teaching you are also learning, aren't you? Learning constantly on how best to transfer the knowledge to the person in front of you? Therefore, an aspect of the guru must be attributed to that person as well. Such were the words of my guru.

My job is to take the knowledge and words of my guru forward. What I understand, I teach. Those who want to learn more, I take some time to search within myself and answer their queries. My work is to invite people who are far more knowledgeable than I am or we are, in order to learn more, understand more and in that process take the vision of my guru forward.

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CONVICTION IN TIMES OF CRISIS (Part 2)

Stability

- Janani Murali

An artiste's financial health has been much discussed over the last few months in view of the Covid crisis. What has come to the fore more than ever before is the fact that this is a topic that has been brushed aside a bit too much for our own good. One of the reasons for this discomfort of discussing it has been a misinterpretation of the 'art and money' equation to mean: 'Art and money are not mutually navigable aspects. The worth of an artiste cannot be measured by money.' What might have helped us would have been this interpretation of the 'art and money' equation: 'The worth of an artiste is beyond the wealth they possess. Their creative spark, pursuit, time and energy cannot be undervalued against a paltry fee.' The narrative that artistes must not seek money at the risk of being labelled 'business-minded' has done us no good. How do we then tackle this situation that we find ourselves in now? Not just a plain matter of paucity of funds but a mind-set as well that needs an overhaul perhaps?

In the previous issue, we spoke at length of the digital deluge and the necessary pause that might be essential to look at WHAT we create, WHY we create and HOW we share it. This is for those artistes taking their performances and interactive sessions to the digital platform to fill the gap in live performances that this pandemic has brought on. For those who were already digitally connected, the transition has been easier. For those who weren't aware but still had access to a digital platform to perform or teach, the transition has been challenging but beneficial as a stop-gap arrangement. Those with the technical expertise are beginning to reach out to those who could benefit from it- these are heart-warming moments of each person lending a helping hand to another. This does not however mean that a hop onto the digital platform has eased out the pockets. Finding and maintaining financial stability remains a challenge. "Conducting events online, managing back end and technology for live streams, multi-media and editing and being open to new ideas even if it is not directly related to the arts' is the need of the hour feel Keerthi Kumar and Roopa Krishnamurthy, performers and event curators. "It is difficult and we will corrode our savings in the process but it will take some reinvention on our part to create new revenue models. This will probably be a true test of our creativity and our willingness to learn and adapt." they say. While a few artistes have known all along the importance of

saving, investment and being prepared for the proverbial rainy day, several others have been living off earnings by the moment. So is it too late to begin saving now that the rainy days are here and we are not headed out for a while anywhere? For those who find themselves in the 'senior' age group, is a solution to savings possible at all? Shreya Nagarajan Singh, arts consultant, who has been organising online sessions to help artistes plan out their finances opines that it is for both the young and old to think smartly about their investments. Yes, the older artistes may have lesser years of investing in front of them compared to the younger generation, but that does not make it less important or not possible. Retirement is inevitable and planning for it is important, she thinks.

We asked a senior financial advisor to list out what we could do in the immediate short term. "In the short term, if classes are going digital, get fees for the next 3 to 6 months. This can give you some immediate cash flow and reduce tension. If you have taken a hall on rent for taking classes, negotiate with landlord for a waiver of rent or reduction of rent for 3 months. Also seek time for payment of rent. One may even consider giving up the space to avoid recurring cost. With Working-From-Home becoming popular, commercial space rentals are likely to come down. If the hall you have taken is centrally located, try to renegotiate lower rentals. All EMI and Credit card payments can be deferred by 3 months under Government Covid guidelines. Interest for delayed payment is leviable but one can at least avoid immediate cash outflow. Ruthlessly cut any expenditure not required now. One can even get books for children from their senior batch. Teach children the value of money. But don't panic. This mess will pass."

Yet another section of the art fraternity reels under financial strain much worse. With absolutely no access to the virtual world and completely dependent on live performances or live teaching sessions, unfortunate stories of traditional artistes taking their life, going into unimaginable debt and worse are surfacing. What we need in this case is an immediate emergency response to their loss of livelihood. Reaching out to artistes in crowdfunded initiatives has been one way of dealing with the situation and those spear heading these initiatives know well that the momentum must be kept high to continue supporting these artistes through this year. With the art fraternity coming together to lend a helping hand, one hopes that the public at large also recognises this need. And so apart from donating towards funding initiatives, sensitising the public towards the plight of these artistes is an effort that every digitally connected artiste

could take on- educate those who may not know, influence those who follow you, motivate those who are looking to help but don't know how or where... this would be our gesture of gratitude to the innumerable ways in which traditional artistes contribute to the arts and in turn nourish our creative pursuits. If you are in contact with a traditional artiste, find and provide avenues to supplement their income- learn a language or skill from them, document their work and enable paid viewership, be a channel to enable their children's education dreams - scout for scholarships that they could apply for, connect patrons and universities who could help, tell their stories- it is not just the plight that must be portrayed but the immense intangible value that they carry on their shoulders that the world must see.

The solution does not end here. What we need is a long-term financial solution for every artiste. Basic financial planning is a given, but surprisingly one finds that many remain unaware or worse, are unable to save from the meagre income. This brings us back to the unfortunate truth that the arts are undervalued and artistes underpaid. It is time to invest our collective energies to push for a change of mind-set towards the arts. How will we do it?

To be continued...

A quick guide to Basic Financial planning

-If you have not planned any long term savings plan, it is time to start. Even a small amount every month is a good start.

-Work out your basic expenses for a month. Rent, children's education, medicines, food and basic clothing are essentials. Jot down on a piece of paper how much you need for these per month. Immediate task is to build a nest which takes care of at least one year cover of these expenses.

-Please do not play in the stock market if you do not know the wild fluctuations one may encounter there.

-Create some fixed deposits in a bank (please stay with bigger banks), then invest through mutual funds. Take the advice of a good banker or expert.

-Savings is not what is left after your expenses. Set aside the targeted amount of savings and manage with what is left.

-Insurance cover is an absolute must. Premiums on life insurance are lower if taken at an early age. Medical expenses can be very high. Without a Hospitalization and Accident cover policy, it can eat into your precious savings. Education expenses of children also can be very high. Please plan for it. Take an endowment policy which can give you a sizable amount after may be 10 or 15 years when they may be going for higher education.

Mental Health Well Being in Classical Dance – An Inquiry

- Ramaa Venugopalan

A recent article in a world dance magazine addressed the mental health of dancers in ballet companies. The counsellor revealed key points that hinder the mental well-being of dancers through their training years. The article had a deep impact on me, and I could not resist from a similar inquiry into the world of Indian classical dance.

Are we classical dancers living in a mental sphere of happiness or anxiety? What are the factors that make up this health index? Are we assessing our mental and emotional well-being? Most importantly, are we dancers truly *happy*?

Warped in layers of perceived notions of divinity, adherence, non-questionable notions, unspoken rules, dancers are so caught in multiple layers of agony that an inquiry into the mental well-being has been rarely assessed.

A glance into the eco-system that defines the sphere of the classical dance and an inquiry into factors that affect mental health reveals much.

The Young Mind – Nascent Influences

The dance teacher, along with the parent, are a key influence on a child's psyche. Children are enrolled early into learning classical dance and this is where the seeds of well-being or otherwise are usually sown. The learning space is a taut box of rigid regimes, discipline, low tolerance, high expectations, and to a large extent a normalisation of identity. Group classes, the usual norm, merges multiple identities into a single one, thus scaling up the expectation that all the students will rise to the benchmark set by the teacher. This, subconsciously, propels the child to expedite the learning curve regardless of their inherent ability. The first seed of anxiety is sown here.

Dr. Aarthi Doss, a practicing physician and child health care specialist, opines that the introduction to any activity always begins with parental persuasion, peer pressure or external influence. This persuasion can also have an impact on the child's ability to adapt to any activity. General Anxiety Disorder, she says, can manifest in multiple ways. Frequent complaints of headaches, anger, lack of focus, or clinging are

the result of suppressing emotions such as helplessness, jealousy, regret, grief and embarrassment; key behaviour patterns that parents must watch out for.

Dr. Aarthi also states that any kind of trauma regarding self-esteem or physical appearance at a young age can have a life-long impact of esteem issues and insecurities. As dance teachers, what one remarks about physical appearances or ability manifests as inner voices in the heads of the young child. If one is not careful, these inner voices amplify and have the power to silence any other ideas of the self. These permeate into the teenage sphere manifesting as anxiety disorders, esteem issues, depression and somatic manifestations.

The initial training years are instructive in nature, devoid of pathways for the children to express themselves. Teachers must tread this path with care. Suppressing a child's response or expression but later expecting the child to be creative and emotive can mar the child's ability and emotional landscape. The key is to help the child deal with emotions, express and provide ample freedom within the confines of the form to enable an organic creative growth. Rather than a strict instruction, for example, says Dr. Aarthi, an explanation to help the child understand why a certain movement is done in a particular way helps.

Teenage and Young Adults – External Influences

The crucial phase – The first noticeable changes are physical appearances. The child has learnt the craft sufficiently and forays into learning compositions that are filled with myriad emotions including sensual and sexual undertones. It is this juncture that predominantly determines how the child grows up into a young adult, adapts to the multiple layers that dance offers, and most importantly develops the attitude that permeates into the self.

Body changes, gender orientation, peer pressure, dealing with co-dancers along with one's own internal understanding of body is a huge mental agony in itself.

Comparison, inducing semblances of competition, exposure to the concept of 'star performers', defining *subjective* success paths, and most importantly the concept of *making it to the good books of the teacher* occurs in this phase. The words and the validation of the teacher are sacrosanct. Questioning the

teacher is unheard of. Mostly. Healthy discussions are way off the radar too. Behavioural patterns, abusive or otherwise are shoved under the carpet and often dismissed as “*the teacher has the right to reprimand and be demanding*”.

The identification of one’s own dancing capabilities comes to the fore during simple and small performance opportunities or group productions. Teachers seldom address this crucial phase sensitively. A discussion on why a particular child is essaying a part is never explained, and the spirit of camaraderie and team work is not addressed. The children are left to make their own subconscious assumptions as to *why they were not good enough* to grab that important opportunity or role.

This phase is also one of self-discovery. Debunking the myth of physical appearances, enabling your child to understand that dance and its overtures are only roleplays, encouraging them towards a holistic approach to the form can keep the mind balanced. It is equally important to keep communication channels open and observe any excessive behaviour patterns in the teenager. Excessive indulgence on a particular aspect, for example, a physical appearance such as jewellery or makeup, or a good body can equally harm the teenager.

“Encourage healthy discussions about ideas, the dance form and possibilities rather than discussing personas. Expand the horizons towards healthy reading habits, lectures, history and allied subjects. Monitoring their online presence and a conversation about its pros and cons also helps them use the online media effectively”, advises Dr Aarthi.

Encouragement, not excessive indulgence, is the key. Non-validation from the parent or teacher can lead to displeasure and self-doubt. This may eventually lead to challenges in relationships, promiscuous sexual and emotional patterns, thus hampering the future. “This process is cyclic,” says Dr. Aarthi and the patterns tend to permeate into future generations.

The learning space must foster an inclusive and understanding atmosphere. As facilitators, it is important to be patient and watch out for bullying, body-shaming, teasing, especially with children grappling with gender and sexual identity.

The Mirage – The desire to be somebody else

If there is a space that continuously feeds into the delusion of being somebody else, it is the dance space. Exposure to successful, globe-trotting performing artists, who speak about dance as an exotic and esoteric entity are key factors towards widening an empty hole within. While one does need to look out for exceptional artistry outside, the learning space actively does not foster the key aspect of *individual happiness and acceptance*. Constantly wanting to be like a *popular dancer* lures the young mind along with a generous thrust of skewed concepts of *excellence* and *perfection*.

Competition and Power Play

The dance performative space is rampant with power play, often brutal. Professional dancers, freelancers, and contractors who work with Gurus /star dancers/senior/popular artists, often agonise over myriad emotions. Unsafe environments with sexual and/or emotional misconduct, passive discrimination, a non-conducive environment to discuss and opine, disparity in financial compensation, expectations of idealism, gruelling rehearsal schedules and travel plans, absence of compassion towards family and other commitments... often leave the youngsters exasperated. Obligation and fear are underlying rules which cannot be broken. The sheer density of dancers who may grab an opportunity away is a constant fear.

The competitive spirit is so deeply rooted that one rarely forges a bond or trusts a co-artist. A deep feeling of exclusion and loneliness plagues fellow dancers. Not being understood or simply heard leads to depression and insecurity. The view of the dancer's world is so myopic that outside help is rarely sought.

Healing and harmony – the way forward

The focus for each dancer is to survive. Concepts such as re-invention, new choreography, breaking barriers, out-of-the-box thinking, and collaboration - are but ways to force oneself into the permanent memory of the galaxy of performing stars. Years of baggage, subconscious conditioning, a sense of self-inflicted purpose, a mirage of fame and glory, clouds the ability to look squarely at the lack of harmony within. Use of anti-depressants, drugs, alcohol abuse, sexual and emotional dysfunction, and a constant need for validation are tell-tale

signs to seek help.

All stakeholders of this eco-system have a shared responsibility. Parents must observe the interest and well-being of the child. The triggering of behavioural patterns, sexual or emotional, requires immediate monitoring and calling out offenders. Acceptance that the child may not be meant for a particular skill is the key towards realising the child's true potential.

Teachers of classical dance must reflect and reinvent notions of power and compassion. We are imparting art, not running a factory to churn out perfect, dancing robots. Providing a safe, conducive environment, fostering an open healthy positive relationship with our students is our basic responsibility. Reaching out to students, allowing them to let go, innovatively encouraging them to address emotions and being kind to their physical issues go a long way in fostering a healthy bond. Let the dance learning space be a safe space for them to be open, debate, and integrate with the ethos of the dance form.

As independent dancers, the onus is on us to reflect on our path, our purpose and to constantly monitor our own well-being. Calling out offenders, defying toxic relationships in the garb of well-known teachers, choreographers, organizers and sharing such information to protect fellow dancers is a serious responsibility.

If continuous anxiety or emotional disturbance persists, reach out to your family physician or a well-wisher who has a history of your mental and physical condition. They can help tap flags and advice accordingly. Sometimes, just talking out helps a long way in addressing and accepting problems. Take the time out to have a dialogue or conversation openly with someone you trust. Accept and understand where these are stemming from. Identifying the source of pain often helps one on the path towards healing believes Dr. Aarthi.

Dance is a reflection of one's own self. One might camouflage it with frills, outward display of happiness and validation. Once the make-up is wiped out and the media is shut down for the day, one must meet oneself in the darkness of the night. If it is filled with peace and harmony, all is well. If not, it is imperative seek help. All else is walking towards a mirage - a futile one at that.

The Dance and the Dancing Body

- Pujita Krishna

There is something about a dancing body that captivates the imagination of all those who are watching. The three-dimensionality of the human figure, more so female, moving, gesturing, expressing, keeping time, harmonious or syncopated, draws the attention and keeps it engaged, even if just for a few moments. The power of the body as a medium for movement and as a conduit for expression ranges from the primitive to the rarefied. It has been associated with ritual of possession and exorcism as in the case of the stambali, dance of the Tunisian Jews or that of the Tuareg of Nigeria, to birthing as in the case of belly dancing, and of course, worship. The tarantella, an Italian folk dance began as an extirpation of poison following the bite of a tarantula: the women danced to rid themselves of the poison.

The body in all of these practices has been treated as an instrument of healing or for connecting to a higher realm, and dance its catalyst. Variants of these nascent forms of dancing exist in India as well. Hewn at the altar of artistry, overtime, dance has increasingly become viewed as a visual form of entertainment, where the body, having transformed from a crude vessel to an elegant allegory, has become a pivotal point of attention, meant to serve as a tool in a craft. But somehow, as an art form, the tool has taken precedence over the craft.

The dancing body as the fulcrum of visual engagement, is confined or liberated as the case might be by two-fold perceptions that are attached to it- by those of the dancer herself/himself and those of the viewer. These perceptions are governed by traditions and social conditioning. A good measure of body perception is also determined by the dance form itself, and its specific physiological, kinetic, and anatomical demands. In no other form is this truer of than ballet.

The upward, sky-aspiring, etheric nature of ballet has meant a set of unusually exacting standards of body flexibility and a premium on thin-ness. George Balanchine, the famous choreographer, co-founder of New York City Ballet, is both venerated for his genius but also infamously credited for the impossibly high standards of the perfect ballet-body. Every so often, he would prop up a prima ballerina, a favourite, who would answer to his description of the tall, waif-like creature adorning his works. Suzanne Farrell, was one such figure. In her paper, 'Dying to Dance: Issues of Body Image, Eating Disorders and Identity in Western Culture', Leighah Beadle-Darcy writes of the experience of Gelsey Kirkland, a former member of the New York City Ballet, as she speaks of Balanchine:

'He halted class and approached me for a kind of physical

inspection. With his knuckles, he thumped my sternum and down my rib cage, clucking with his tongue and remarking, “Must see those bones.”

The ethereality of the body is somehow the cornerstone of ballet. This may also have something to do with the fact that a balletic performance while spurred on with orchestral music has little or no literary content. There is no song. In the absence of the word, the body and its corporeality become the focus.

On the other side of the pond, take the case of Flamenco, an example of a dance form that has its roots in gypsies channeling the emotions of a wandering community through profound expressivity. In Flamenco, the body is a dynamo of searing angst pounded out through the zapateado (footwork) and palmas (claps), and the comportment of the body, especially that of the upper body, which is supposed to carry the unbending ‘truth’, the passion or duende, the individual stamp of expression. There have been studies which suggest that Flamenco has influences of Kathak since the gypsy community is widely believed to have originated from India. The body is subservient to individual expression, and pressed into service as an agent of ‘actitud’ and ‘compas’. Dr. Gabriella Estrada, independent scholar, choreographer and journalist speaks of how the legendary El Farruco would ‘captivate’ everyone simply by the lift of his arm indicating that, in Flamenco there is no desired body type, but it is and must be an agent of a fierce expressivity that must ‘appear’ to emanate from a deep place, not just from within the body of the dancer but from the trail of history of its gypsy progenitors. In fact she goes on to say that there is a decided preference in traditional Flamenco for a more grounded, perhaps heavier, and a mature performer. A mature performer is able to channel the ‘inner’ into the ‘outer’. The Flamenco dancer is alone; even while buttressed by musicians, his art is introverted. It is almost as if the Flamenco dancer is dancing for himself or herself. Once again, note, there is music but there is no song. There are no words, or minimal, if any, accompanying the movement. The viewer therefore in the absence of meaning, creates his or her own, by fixating solely on the volatile spontaneity of the dancing body.

Indian margi dance traditions however, are founded on different principles. Which is why, even beyond mere perfection of technique and skill, the exalted was that which ‘touched’, ‘moved’ or elicited a parallel, synchronous, unpremeditated, response in the form of ‘rasa’. Abhinaya or expressiveness, is thus held aloft as the acme of a dancer’s artistry. There is no easy way to define rasa. But, this rasa, or for want of a better word, a sympathetic chord between the dancer and the viewer, may emanate from the body of the dancer but it traverses in concentric circles back and forth between the dancer and the viewer. The recreation of the mood, a ‘bhava’ and therefore a corresponding ‘bhavana’ in the viewer is de-coupled from the

body. Jayachandran, a PhD research scholar, avers that dance in India is not a performing art, it is a knowledge tradition. The actual performance that is seen on the stage is the culmination of years of work that have been plied into the art. This is most noteworthy in a tradition like Koodiyattam that straddles the tripod of dance, theatre and ritual. The passing on the baton, so to speak, of being a performer therefore was traditionally considered a sacred duty.

The Indian dancer is always aware of the audience. Indeed, she is seeking to make a connection with the audience. But, she is only incidental to the story she presents as she transports the viewer from the confines of time and space to yet another realm. She slows down time or elongates it, if you will, by playing around with time as a concept, as in the case of tala, or gingerly guides the viewers through an arc of emotions through the deliberate and strategized use of raga, song and gesture.

“Performance has not happened when the person who is watching remembers the body of the dancer,” says Jayachandran. The transparency of the body of the dancer is what makes the dancer’s art truly virtuosic. By ‘transparent’, he means, the reduced materiality of the body because something else more ephemeral takes over that leaves a scent of memory of not the dancer but of the import of what was danced. The performance therefore has happened in an imagined space - a sort of shared cloud between the dancer and the viewer.

Senior bharatnatyam dancer, Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant, recalls the words of her guru Rukmini Devi Arundale who would advise her students at Kalakshetra to forget the body when they got on to the stage. With the body goes self-identification of the ego and a sense of self-ness. ‘She insisted that the practice had to be so thorough, beyond just muscle memory, that the dancer could afford to lose oneself in the portrayal so much so that, members of the audience could come and tell you, we didn’t see you, but we saw such and such goddess or such and such deity.’ Today, however, she does feel that the engagement with the physicality of the body is quite common with dancers across the country especially since there is this new ‘fitness culture’ that has redefined the way we view bodies in general. This new culture stands in stark contrast to a time when a dancer could be thin, fat, stocky, short, bald, as long as he or she could create a sense of enduring fulfilment in the audience. While awareness of being fit is a positive thing, she cautions against excessive body- judgement.

In so far as the purpose and ultimate goal of an Indian dancer is concerned, it may serve us well to remind ourselves every so often that the dancer’s body cannot be the cynosure, it cannot detract from the performance itself. It may draw in, it may appeal but it cannot be the focal point. The end point is never to have the rasika say, ‘what a dancer!’, but to say, ‘what a performance!’

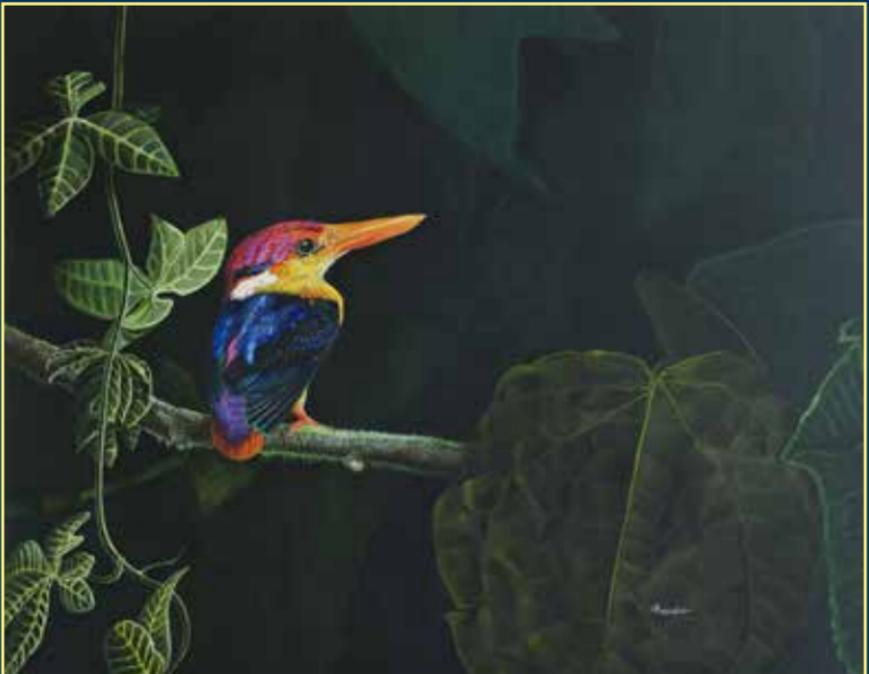
Prasad Natarajan

- *Pramila Lochan*

Since verbal communication was tough to master, I always searched means to express myself through visuals. Written communication is also another means that appeals to me more. Art has always been part of my life, and I have been sketching from the age of seven. Hence my go to medium is Pen and Ink. Over the years I have been honing my skills with graphite pencils, watercolors, acrylics and oils and tried my hand in print making as well.

Expressing what I feel deeply is my main aim to create. As a professional artist, I spend many hours experimenting with many mediums. Working on artworks is mixed with emotions of frustration and relief at the same time. Frustration is when I am unable to portray my ideas into visual form and relief is when I complete the artwork. The feeling of unfulfillment always follows me throughout. This helps me stay grounded and learn everyday. The time spent on the drafting-board or easel is a time full of struggle and breakthroughs. I thrive to improve on my craft by constantly working on interesting compositions, colors and narratives.

My love for outdoors led me to nature art, photography and poetry. Sketches and paintings are a means to share with the viewers intimate moments I get to spend with an individual species in their natural habitat. If my creation makes my viewer stop in their tracks and have a second glance, I feel that it is a successful work, and has met its purpose. I strongly believe that visual representation is a powerful medium to reach across the world. Art is an important tool and a powerful medium in Wildlife conservation.



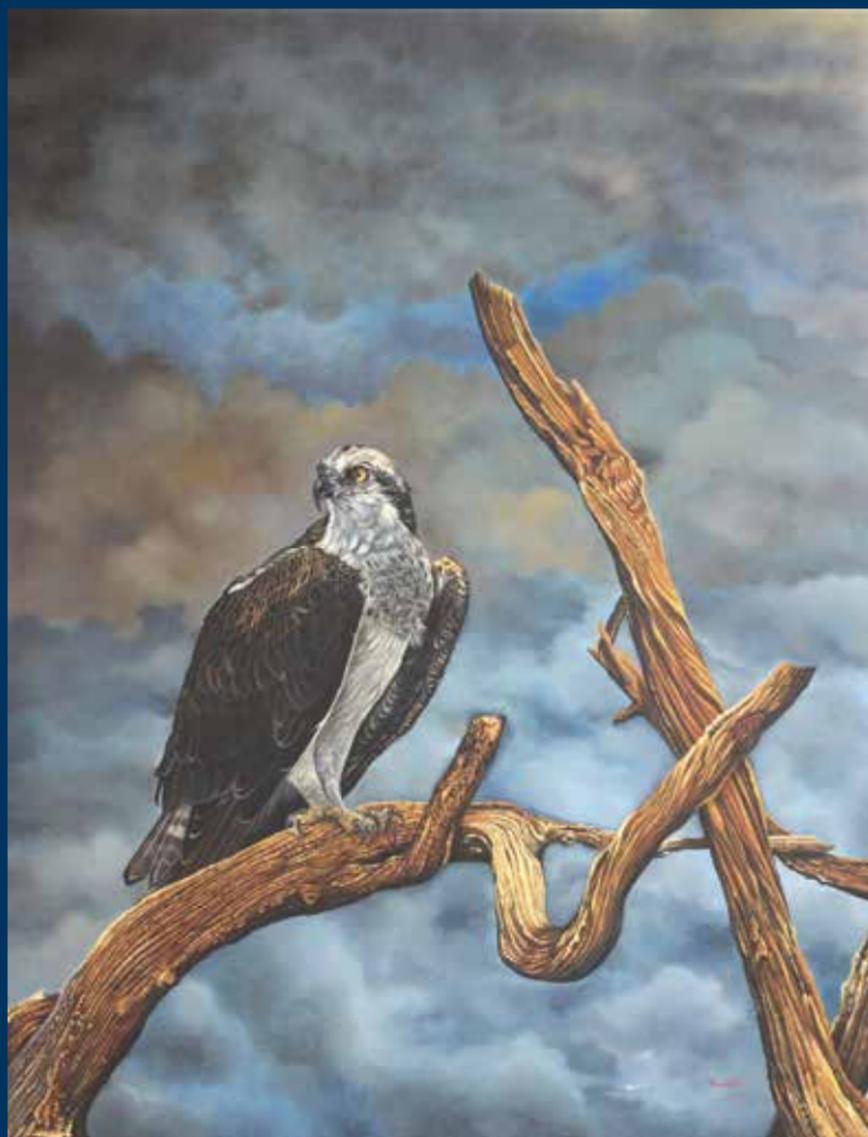
Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher - acrylic



Common Kestrel - photograph



Combduck Pair-Brush Ink Pen



Osprey - oil



GreenVine Snake - photograph

Prasad Natarajan (born: 2nd April 1983) is one of India's acclaimed wildlife artist based in Bengaluru. He is the Founder of Artist for Wildlife and Nature (AWN) and featured in many leading wildlife



magazines for his work and contribution. Primarily self-taught, he has been working on wildlife art from 2005 and travels around the world to study his subjects' behaviour in their natural habitat. He gathers as much information as possible through images and field sketches. This enables him to depict his subjects as accurately as possible when sketches and images transform into finished works at his studio Mango Grove Art Gallery/Studio. His contribution includes a first of its kind All India "AWN Annual show 2017/18" and 2018/19" held at Venkatappa Art Gallery, Bangalore. He has organized "Artists for Birds" (July 2018/19) and "AWN Miniatures" (July 2019) group shows. His Wildlife photographs have won awards, published in international dalties and are in permanent collections of top wildlife artists across the world. His work has been featured in the BNHS Hornbill magazine and calendar among top 20 Indian wildlife artists. Recently his Artwork was published on the cover-page of "Indian Birds" (June 2020). Invited by educational institutes and nature related organizations to deliver lectures on nature art, he has presented a talk show as Wildlife Artist for All India Radio, Bangalore. To read and see more about the artist and his work www.onmyeasel.com.