

LETTERS

This is with reference to the article 'The Valmiki spell' (FR, July 8).

The write-up on the connection between Valmiki and Tyagaraja was informative, educative and intellectual. The extent to which Tyagaraja's kritis were relevant to Valmiki's slokas has been brought out effectively and in an appealing manner. The writer has touched upon the significance of all the Kandams.

The content is sure to kindle interest among musicians to learn more about the connection. Also, the services of Sri Krishna Gana Sabha to the cause of music through 'Rasanubhava' is praiseworthy.

The fertile imagination of

Tyagaraja, his poetic expressions, high philosophy, richness of phrasings and eloquence of sahitya reflect the writer's power of analysis and observation. The commentary presents a bird's eye view of the sadguru's works. Such articles are sure to throw light on the divine aspect of music, and also the greatness of Tyagaraja. The music fraternity must remember him with pride and gratitude.

Tiruvaidamarudur S. Radhakrishnan
Chennai

More on Kanchipuram

This refers to the informative article 'An expert's insight' (FR, July 15) by Kausalya Santhanam.

It is said that out of the 108 divya desas, about a

dozen are located in Kanchipuram and four in Uraham. Actually, there are 14 divya desas in Kanchipuram, including the four at Uraham (five in Little Kanchipuram and nine in Big Kanchi).

The ones at Little Kanchi are Tiru Aththiyur; Ashtabhujam; Tiruththanaha; Tiruveha and Tiruvelukkai.

The divya desas at Big Kanchipuram are Tiruooragam; Tirukkaragam; Tiruneeragam; Tirukkalvanur; Tirunilathingal Thundam; Tiruparameswara Vinnagam; Tiruppavalavannam and Tiruppadaagam.

(The first four are in Tiruooragam in Ulaganatha Perumal temple).

K. Vasu
Ashok Nagar, Chennai

An appeal

The Pancharatna kriti, 'Duduku Gala,' in Gowla is sung as 'Dhudu Gala Nane Dhora Koduku Brochura' in many places to avoid distortion in meaning.

This has been accepted by vidwans such as R.K. Srikantan, Srivatsa, Prof. TRS, Pudukottai Sanjeevi Bhagavata and others.

Experts in the field are also of the view that this method of singing is very much in order.

This is an appeal to the music fraternity to express their views regarding the same.

Tiruvaidamarudur S. Radhakrishnan,
Chennai.

Imaginative attempt

Brindavan Audio - CD

M. Chandrasekharan
Carnatic Classical - violin -
Rs.150.

Sangita Kalanidhi M. Chandrasekharan is a remarkable musician who has fought against many odds with ceaseless grit and courage through the years to establish himself as one of the fore rankers in the discipline of Carnatic music as a violinist, vocalist, guru and so on.

The album titled, 'Panchadasa Ragas' is an interesting, imaginative attempt to highlight the salient features of 15 melodies.

Beginning with a brief Nattai, the vidwan presents both oral and instrumental expression to Narayani, Sunadhavinodini, Rasaali, Guntakriya, Devamruthavarshini, Revagupti, Shuddhsarang, Nayaki, Na-

tabhairavi, Balahamsa, Madhukauns, Brindavana Saranga, Brindavani, Misrakhams and Sindhubhairavi.

The agenda is a pleasant combination of Carnatic and Hindustani ragas. The parent scale for every raga is mentioned as also the ascending and descending format.

The other aspects of each raga such as vakra, varja and jeeva swaras are brought into clear focus in the singing and in the violin version.

Some of the popular songs in these ragas by Tyagaraja, Swati Tirunal, Papanasam Sivan, Mysore Sadasiva Rao, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Periyasami Theoran are cited as examples.

The concept and compilation are credited to Tiruvaidamarudur Radhakrishnan.

S.P.

Hindus Friday
5th March
2007

Priya bouquet

Tiruvaidamarudur Radhakrishnan, mridangam artist, will present a vocal concert at Parvathy on Eldam's Road, Alwarpet, tomorrow, 6.15 p.m. He will present a bunch of Priya ragas that include Shanmukhapriya, Rathipathipriya, Rasikapriya, Natakapriya and so on.

More on mridangam

This is with reference to 'Instrument of Nandi' published in these columns of October 12.

With about 40 years of experience as a performing mridangam vidwan, I wish to add to the information given in the piece.

Balaguru, who is in the field of repairing the instrument for nearly two decades (he himself is a good percussionist), helped me with the details.

Mridangam can also be made out of *Mayil konrai* and *Kodukkapuli* wood which gives the same pleasing sound as the one made out of jackfruit wood. It is not right to assume that more weight gives the instrument better resonance.

Even lighter instrument can produce a good sound, provided the *Muttu* (important portion in assembling this instrument) is properly set.

Mr. Balaguru talks of a variation he made in 1994 and this has a

wide acceptance in the musical field.

The assembly line is the same except both the ends of the instrument are fixed to a bolt and nut. This has the following advantages.

The sruti of the instrument can be adjusted for a range of one to three kattai by bolt and nut and no *Kallu Pillu* is required. This also does not involve tightening of the straps.

The alignment of meetu and chappu will not vary and what is technically known as *Yachu Kannu Thagu Kannu* will not occur. Even the left and right leather covering can be replaced with an alternative one by the artiste himself. Weather conditions have little influence on this kind of instrument. Light in weight it is easy to carry.

Tiruvaidamarudur S. Radhakrishnan,
mridangam vidwan