

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU AT THE "SADGURU SRI TYAGARAJA REVISITED" ORGANISED BY THE SARADHI – THE ACADEMY OF ART AND CULTURE AT SADGURU GNANANANDA HALL, ALWARPET, CHENNAI ON 31.07.2019 AT 6.30 P.M**

Thiru.Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest at the 'Sadguru Sri Tyagaraja Revisited" organised by the Saradhi-The Academy of Art and Culture at Sadguru Gnanananda Hall, at Chennai today (31.7.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "It gives me happiness to be here at the function organised by SARADHI – The Academy of Art and Culture on the occasion of the inauguration of "Sadguru Sri Tyagaraja Revisited".

The name of Tyagaraja brings to our mind several praiseworthy aspects of our culture and the manner in which it was transmitted. I was at the Tyagaraja Aradhana held at Thiruvaiyaru last year and I could see the passion and devotion the participating musicians had for Carnatic Music. The dedication with which this tradition is being propagated is incredible and admirable.

Music is the complete expression of the soul reflecting the inner beauty within us. Carnatic Music which was developed in the Southern part of India is characterized by the total lack of adulteration from other forms of music brought in by invading rulers from Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan. In that sense Carnatic Music has substantially retained its original form, its traditional roots and its cultural purity.

Purandara Dasa, who lived in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries, is credited with the codification of Carnatic Music. He was also a great composer and thousands of songs are attributed to him. After him came a great theorist of Carnatic Music Venkata Mukhi, who developed the system of classifying the ragas of Carnatic Music.

As the Carnatic Music form evolved, it attained its peak in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when the 'Trinity' of Thyagaraja Swamigal, Shamashastrri and Muthuswami Dikshitar composed their

unforgettable compositions. Subsequently it was enriched by many other great composers like, Papanasam Sivan, Swati Thirunal and Annamacharya.

It is important to recall at this stage that the Tamil Trinity of Muthu Thandavar, Arunachala Kavi and Marimutthu Pillai have through their hundreds of devotional songs immensely helped in the evolution of the Tamil Classical Music tradition.

Thyaga Brahman was born on the day of the Pushya star in the month of May, 252 years back. His family which originally hailed from the Kakarla village of Kurnool district had moved to Thiruvarur, fearing oppression at the hands of the invading armies after the Vijayanagar Empire collapsed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century CE. They were among a large number of families that sought refuge under the Maratha King of Thanjavur. Thyagaraja's ancestors were known for their expertise in singing and storytelling. Pleased with their performance the King of Thanjavur gifted a house to them in Thiruvaiyaru, to which place the family shifted after the birth of Thyagaraja. Thyagaraja started learning music at an early age and started singing small kritis even from the age of 17 years. In 1802, his guru, Sonti Venkataramanayya arranged for his arangetram where the vidwans of the palace were assembled. Thyagaraja sang his own composition, Dorakuna ituvanti in the Bilahari raga. Impressed by the young lad's talent, the king of Thanjavur, Sarfoji II invited Thyagaraja to the palace and offered him the position of Samasthana Vidwan at the Durbar. But, Thyagaraja's desire was to compose songs and only serve the Supreme Lord Rama and not any other ordinary mortal, be he a king or a noble. He decided to dedicate himself to Carnatic music and for singing the praise of his beloved Lord Rama and therefore declined the offer of the King. There lay his greatness and uniqueness.

Thyaga Brahman's outpouring of music was inspired by devotion and divine grace and it is no wonder that even today when his songs are sung one is able to visualize the presence of Lord Rama. He composed his divine Kritis mostly in Telugu and in these he makes an appeal to Lord Rama whom he considered as his guru, guide and master. One gets transcended to another world when listening to Thyagaraja famous Pancharatna Kritis among which are Entharo Mahanu Bhavulu and Nagumomu Ganaleni.

He has also composed Kritis in praise of Shiva, Sakthi, Ganesha, Karthikeya and Hanuman. He has also composed two musical plays – Pragalatha Bakthi Vijayam and Naukha Charitam. His life was a true reflection of the meaning of the name 'Thyagaraja' which means king among renouncers. He never aspired for wealth or fame and was content in giving vent to his bhakthi through his compositions.

In the early oral traditions of the Upanishads, the guru–shishya relationship had evolved into a perfect mechanism for transmission of knowledge. The term "Upanishad" is derived from the Sanskrit words "upa" (near), "ni" (down) and "sad" (to sit) — so it means "sitting down near" a spiritual teacher to receive instruction.

We have even today some distinguished Carnatic musicians who can provide accounts of their real life experiences in the guru sishya tradition.

This evening in our midst is Brahmasri. Dr. Tadepally Lokanadha Sarma, a great musician with a profound knowledge of music on whom I have conferred the Title 'Pranava Naadopaasaka'. He is an ardent devotee of Tyagaraja Swami and a living illustration of the success of the Guru-Sishya tradition having been fortunate to have been trained by the legendary Chittoor Subramania Pillai.

I am happy that Brahmasri. Dr. Tadepally Lokanadha Sarma is being honoured in the city of Chennai where the connoisseurs of art - the rasikas have kept alive the tradition of patronising the fine arts with zest and vigour.

The people of Chennai have nurtured Carnatic music, classical dance and its traditions for several centuries. We are all justifiably proud of the fact that Chennai has been listed in the UNESCO's Creative Cities Network.

It should be our firm resolve to make the cultural institutions of India grow stronger with time so as to cement the foundations of our great nation and thus keep the banner of our culture and tradition flying high so that generations to come will feel proud of their inheritance just as we do so now.

From its humble beginnings in 2001 with just 10 students, in the last 19 years SARADHI has grown into a well known social and cultural organisation. Like a true

charioteer the organisation is steering the younger generation towards understanding the essence of Indian Culture through the vehicle of Art, Music and Dance. I congratulate the management, staff and students of SARADHI – The Academy of Art and Culture who have taken special efforts to organise this cultural programme. I am certain that noble initiatives such as these will be carried forward into the future with greater strength and vigour. May success greet them at every step along the way”.

On this occasion Thirumathi. Kala Sasikumar, Founder and Director, Saradhi Academy of Art Culture, Dr.Tadepally Lokananda Sarma, Thiru. K.N.Ramaswamy, Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Thiru M.Padmanaban, Organizer Committee Member and other dignitaries were participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai-22  
Date: 31.7.2019

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Joint Director(PR)