

FOREWORD

Dear Ms.Ray,

Krishna Banerjee has passed on to me for review, the Profiles of your proposed book titled as "Indian Music for English Speaking Singers: A complete Practical Guide to Classical Indian Music", which will be the first of a series of publications aimed at acquainting the Western world with the art and science of Indian Classical music and Rabindra Sangeet with as simple and easy-to-learn presentation as may be possible.

I have gone through your write ups with great interest, for yours seems to be a pioneering work indeed of its of kind. Conceptually, there is no denying the fact that music lovers outside Indian subcontinent find it very hard, if not impossible, to learn Indian music largely because their notation systems and structural forms are vastly different from those of Western music. To this extent your project for a series of publications to present the basic science and theoretical aspects of Indian music in an easily understandable manner to the vast multitude of music lovers in the English speaking world and to thereby kindle their interest to learn and appreciate our music, is no doubt a big step towards bridging the cultural gap between the East and West. Your efforts in this direction, therefore, is certainly laudable and deserves encouragement. The methodology you have adopted for introducing Indian music to learners appears as appropriate, more so with your selection of Jyotirindranath's notation system as the medium for teaching the structural forms of our music. The systematic exposition of Indian music, as outlined in the various chapters of your above-named book, with emphasis on practical exercises accompanying the theoretical descriptions of Ragas and Taals in each chapter, should also be quite useful to the students.

Significantly, as you have stated, the volume under reference will be a text book of Indian Classical music as well as an "Introductory and preparatory book" for Rabindra Sangeet, I would therefore, assume that the relevant chapters describing the various Ragas and Taals will simultaneously portray their applications both in the pure Classical and Tagore songs. Herein you might have brought the subtle differences the two music forms and the variations which the great poet-composer himself made while employing the Classical Ragas to his own songs. The same genius also propelled him to employ many of the Classical Taals, as you know, with some modifications, to suit the rhythm of his lyrics; thereby creating a number of new Taals. Thus Rabindra Sangeet, while greatly influenced by Classical Indian music, achieved new dimensions and a distinctive quality of its own under the creative genius of its master, a fact which, I hope, will be brought out in your book for the benefit of the students and lovers of Indian music alike.

Overall, your efforts to reach Indian music, including Rabindra Sangeet, to the vast multitude of English speaking students and music lovers of the West, are indeed highly commendable and I wish you great success.

With warm regards,
Yours affectionately

Dated, Calcutta,
19.5.92

Signed. *Suchitra Mitra.*