

## PREFACE

In 1991, when I watched "Mahabharatha" by British Director Peter Brook on the television, I noticed that all the casts except one, version of the great Indian epic. The director chose some songs from Rabindranath Tagore's creation as they are; but the singer was an Indian artist and not an English speaking one. This act made me think that although the West is interested in Indian music, yet she does not have any means to sing it herself because of lack of learning facilities. All the existing notations of Indian music are completely dependent on one or the other Indian script.

Once Arnold A. Bake, a great admirer and appreciator of Rabindranath Tagore, who spent a long time in the international university of Vishwa-Bharathi (a seat of universal learning) at Shanti-Niketan (an abode of peace) as a teacher of Western music and as a learner of Indian music, described "classical Hindu music" as "an extremely sophisticated one, bound by strict rules" in his book *Chansons de Rabindranath Tagore*. This millennia-old treasure is remaining concealed within the boundaries of the heights of the Himalayas and the depths of the Indian Ocean. All these facts inspired me to find some means by which the Indian classical music as well as Rabindranath Tagore's musical treasure could be brought on the international platform. There are more than one musical notation currently in use in India; I studied them all and found that one invented by Jyotirindranath Tagore, one of the older brothers of Rabindranath Tagore, is most modern, most scientific and most easily acceptable to a computer keyboard. So, with some modifications and changes I invented an easy to learn set of notations for Indian music. It is suitable and sufficient to convert any type of existing Indian musical notations and represent any type of Indian music -- "Hindustani" or "Karnataki" (North or South Indian) music, vocal or instrumental.

This is the background in which the book **INDIAN MUSIC FOR ENGLISH SPEAKING SINGERS: A Complete Practical Guide to Millennia Old Indian Classical Music** was planned to be written. This book should be the first of its kind and it may be considered as a self-completed textbook of Indian classical music or as a preparatory book for Rabindra-Sangeet (songs of Rabindranath Tagore).

To suit the needs of learners of different levels, this book is divided into three major parts -- elementary, intermediate and advanced. It includes elementary voice training and concepts of beats. Since timing plays a very important role in Indian music and dances, the notations of rhythm patterns is also included in the curriculum. The structures of thirty-five "Raags" have been discussed and explained theoretically as well as practically by means of "Sargam", and are illustrated by songs with all their special features. Although this book is not entirely devoted to musical theories, some very important and essential terminologies and concepts are defined and briefly explained. Every effort has been taken to make the contents simple and easily understandable by using tables and chart whenever possible and necessary.

This book has been written in the pattern of a textbook at college or university level. The curriculum has been constructed according to those followed by leading universities in India. The first few chapters are of shorter length as it takes longer time to master a skill in the initial stages and the instructors may plan their lessons accordingly. All possible measures have been taken to make this rich treasure accessible to all who want to learn it. This book is designed for various sections of the society. The people who do not have

any background of Indian cultures yet are academically curious in it, will find this book interesting and instructive. Secondly, the people with origin in the Indian subcontinent, living in the United States and abroad, who have good idea about the richness of Indian music and are most eager to pass this treasured heritage to the next generation, may find it extremely helpful for this purpose. For this purpose nobody has to learn any of the many Indian languages. This book will save much of the time and energy of the new learners as well as of their teachers. The universities, which have their department of Asian studies, may find this book extremely helpful. The schools that teach Indian cultures, especially Indian music and dances may find it useful.

Lastly the cover was designed and drawn by the author herself. The image of Goddess **Saraswati**, on a white swan, who is believed to be the goddess of all sorts of wisdom and fine arts.

All my time and energy will be purposeful if this book may serve the lovers and learners of Indian music in the way it is meant to do.

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*Uma Ray*