

IFAASD

15th Annual
Music & Dance
FESTIVAL





A Message from the Secretary



Dear Patrons,

Welcome to the 15th Annual Indian Music and Dance Festival! I hope you and your family are doing well. This festival is a special festival as we come from a two-year break due to Covid. We celebrate the musical legacies of Bharat Ratna Ravi Shankar, Padma Bhushan R.K. Srikantan, Padma Bhushan Lalgudi Jayaraman and natya legacy of Padma Bhushan Kalanidhi Narayanan. This year's program will honor artists including Sangita Kalanidhi Chitravina Ravikiran, Guru Neyveli Santhanagopalan, Guru Priyadarsini Govind, and Odissi exponent, Sujata Mohapatra.

Before we leave the two challenging years behind us, here's a recap on what you helped us accomplish:

1. We broadcasted select programs from past festivals on a weekly basis.
2. We started broadcasting on a bimonthly basis a Lecdem series from July of 2020, which was pioneered by Smt. Revathi Subramanian. We had the pleasure of listening to over 40 lecdems in a variety of topics including music and dance.
3. We broadcasted a special concert by Kaushiki Chakraborty.
4. We collaborated with Mohan Foundation, an organ

donation organization in India to stream a number of other events (eg: Warsi Brothers, Aishwarya Srinivas, Shankar Mahadevan Academy, and Usha Uthup to name a few). We also brought a Bollywood program in collaboration with Mohammad Rafi Foundation.

5. We broadcasted concerts that were put together by the Federation of City Sabhas for 2020. These 150 programs featuring 250 artists showcased India's vocal and instrumental music, dance, drama, and namasangeerthanams, These programs were free to IFAASD patrons.

6. We are broadcasting the Federation of Sabhaa concerts as well as the First Edition Arts programs (about 100 concerts) for all IFAASD 2021- 2022 paid subscribers. These unique events include Carnatic (vocal and instrumental) music Hindustani music, as well as dance, dramas and namasangeerthanams.

We are keenly focused on our future together as we celebrate 15 years of adventurous artistic engagement. As we begin to celebrate the past two years of activities, we want to take a moment to send a note of thanks to you. Your active participation in the academy's activities as well as your financial contributions to its growth and development have enabled us to continue to offer quality program during the pandemic

Working closely with the team of many organizers, the IFAASD board's vision for this year's festival was to add unique depth and dimension to the academy's repertoire. For the next three days, our wonderful city of San Diego will become even more popular in Southern California as we host 10 events featuring over 40 artists from India and around the U.S. and over 50 young students of music and dance from San Diego.

The board joins me in inviting you all to thoroughly enjoy high caliber vocal, instrumental, and dance programs throughout the entirety of this grand festival. We greatly appreciate your support and presence at every one of the events scheduled over the next three days. Once more, I'd like to extend a hearty welcome to all of you, and wish you all an enjoyable experience as patrons of the Indian Fine Arts Academy of San Diego!

Sincerely,

Shekar Viswanathan

Secretary, Indian Fine Arts Academy of San Diego



Sangeeta Acharya Tiruvaiyaru S R Krishnan Guest of Honor

Sangeeta Acharya Tiruvaiyaru S R Krishnan has

been a Vākgēyakāra, Védic scholar, poet, lyricist, composer, journalist, a story writer, and an operatic playwright.

Krishnan was trained in KarnátaKa Sangītam by his father Gāna-Bhūshaṇam Brahmasri Kumāramangalam Srinivāsa Rāghavan (KSR), and by many other legends of the 20th Century including Maharājapuram Viswanātha Iyer, Madurai Mani Iyer and G.N. Bala Subramanyam. Krishnan has been performing since 1955 in India, Far East Asia, Europe, Great Britain, and the US, accompanied by well-known artists many of whom are leading names in the Indian Music world. Krishnan is also a celebrated exponent of ‘Dakshina-sampradaya-Sankeertanam, Abhang-Sankeertan & Hari-Kathá traditions; he has performed these divine formats encompassing music from both renowned traditions of India. His Gurus for these traditions include Brahmasri KSR, Brahmasri Náthamuni Nārāyaṇa-Iyengar, Abhang Sirónmañi Nārāyaṇa-Sástri, and Swámi Haridoss Giri (renowned as ‘Guruji’) with whom Krishnan had performed since 1959 until Guruji’s passing away in 1990. Krishna’s earliest Opera based on three versions of “Rámāyaṇa”, titled Sitāyāscaritam-Mahat & Triveni-Ramayana” was staged in 1965. A thespian since his youth, Krishnan had performed in the prestigious Kalidas Festivals in Ujjain to play leading roles in many of Kalidas’s famed works. He has hundreds of

live recordings; some of which are available, on-line, and also on two YouTube channels.

A disciple of His Holiness Jagadguru Kanchi Paramāchārya (68th Pontiff of the Adi Sankra Order), Krishnan continued training in the Vedas and scriptures in Sanskrit College, Madras under the auspices of Paramāchārya.

Krishnan with his wife Radha and his daughters/disciples, ‘Krishnan-Sisters’ – Priya, Harini & Subha, also musicians– are all involved in several philanthropic activities. His performances are mostly fundraisers for Charities and Philanthropy and those live recordings supplement the Krishna’s support to charities, Homes for the mentally and physically challenged and hospitals for the underprivileged.

A gold medalist from the University of Madras, India, Krishnan is a Fellow of the Royal Chartered Institute of Bankers (London) and a Fellow of the Institute of Financial Accountants (London) since the 1970s. Krishnan has held top executive positions with several International Banks, in Asia, Europe, Great Britain and the US, and has widely traveled the globe for 50 years. He is the CEO of and Chairmen of two reputed US Fiduciary firms serving at the nomination of US Federal and State Agencies, Regulators, Banks, and Foreign Governments.

He also serves as the Special Deputy Commissioner of California State Department of Financial Protection & Innovation.

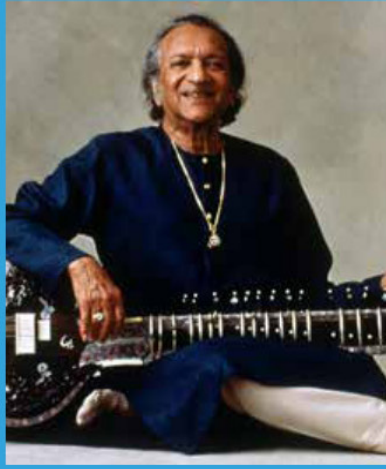
The musical journey of a Legend, as an inventive and adaptive genius

-By Thiruvaiyaru S R Krishnan

Prologue :

A lot has been said and written about Bharat Ratna Ravi Shankar, affectionately referred to by millions of global fans as 'Guruji' or 'Panditji'. The purpose of this essay is not an attempt at *yet-another* biography, since a hundred such books have been written by many writers and artists. Lord Yehudi Menuhin¹ wrote the preface to Ravi Shankar's first autobiography (1969) with these lines:

"To the Indian quality of serenity, the Indian musician brings an exalted personal expression of union with the Infinite, as in 'Infinite of Love'. Few modern composers in the West have achieved this quality, though we revere it in the works of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart. If the Indian Musicians like Ravi Shankar, who are so graciously beginning to bring this genius to us, can help us find this quality again, then we shall have much to thank them for".



Nevertheless, albeit my disclaimer, one cannot write about "Ravi Shankar's music" without appreciating the human being, however briefly, at the various stages of his colorful life of music and his struggles, exaltations and triumph, all of which helped create a larger-than-legend stature in the global music scene, earning respect from even the most grudging critics!

Robindro Shaunkor Chowdhury, (fifth of the seven children of Shyam Shankar Chowdhury² and Hemangini,) born on April 7, 1920, in *Kashi* (the oldest name for Varanasi or Benares), was

called by many affectionate names such as Robindro, Robi, Robu, Ravindra and "Ravi". Ravi's eldest brother, Uday³ (Shankar), whom Ravi refers to as 'Dada' throughout his life, out of love and admiration, had been his guide, mentor, and the father-figure who catapulted him from a mundane old-town life to international limelight.

Despite the numerous titles of honor and the near-universal usage of admiring references to Ravi Shankar, I would henceforth refer to the maestro as 'Ravi' while referring to the 'Legend'.

AlAp:

Ravi begins the description of his life's journey in his 1999 autobiography, with this confessional statement

¹ The Right Honorable Lord Yehudi Menuhin, OM KBE (1916-1999) was an American born violinist, considered to be one of the greatest violinists that ever lived, and played the *Soil Stradivarius*, one of the finest violins ever made. He will be referred to as 'Yahudi' or 'Menuhin' based on context.

² Originally called *Shyam Shankar Chattopadhyaya*, *Shyam Shankar* reluctantly kept the surname of *Chowdhury* as English men addressed him; *Shyam* was a statesman, barrister, philosopher, writer, amateur musician and the chief minister to the Maharajah of *Jhalawar*, a princely province of what is 'Rajasthan' today.

³ Ravi narrates with wonderment that he met *Dada* for the first time in his life when he was 9 years old – when *Dada* returned from an extended European tour.

‘..to write a book on one’s own life is not an easy job, especially having gone through...a myriad of characters and a jungle of events and incidents happening in different parts of the world...especially when one is not an organized diary writer!’.

Ravi’s adoration for his mother grew from his keen observation of the way she tackled the struggles of life in Benares, with least bitterness or revelation of her inner feelings. These formative years were also influenced by Ravi’s intense passion for reading, especially ‘Mahabharat’ and ‘Ramayana’ since Ravi was always drawn to ‘mythology’ and the mysticism in these epics. As a naïve nine-year-old boy, Ravi believed a mischievous school mate’s claim that the man with matted hair and a *rukdráksha* necklace and a divine looking lady visiting his mother were ‘*Shiva and Parvati*’. Ravi became, later, a devotee of that very lady, who was none other than ‘*(Yogi) máta Anandamayi*’. Hollywood movies (initially “silent” and later “sound”) kindled Ravi’s curiosity replacing his fascination with mysticism. Little did the young Ravi know then that within decades, he would be the talk of the celluloid world, composing music for ‘singing movies’ which became enormously popular in the global cinema!

From his somewhat lonely and Spartan childhood in Benares, young Ravi was whisked away to Paris at a tender age of ten to the glamor and tumult of French highlife, guided by his elder brother ‘dada’ (Uday Shankar)⁴. After absorbing different indigenous dance styles of India and performing extensively in India, Uday wanted to assemble a dance troupe (1929-1930) for a World tour. Given the stigma associated with dance, Uday had problems finding male and female dancers and hence persuaded his entire family in Benares (uncles, cousins, brothers and even a friend) to accompany him to Paris in 1930. Getting Indian sponsors to finance his

European tour proved equally difficult. Fortunately, Uday’s friendship with Alice Boner⁵, (a wealthy artist who later played an important role in the lives of Ravi and his family members), gave him a life line; Alice Boner became the guardian -angel who gave the much needed financial and emotional support for Uday’s risky venture(s).

Ravi fondly recollects, with gratitude, her role in exhaustive detail in his autobiography. The group’s premier in Theatre Champs-Élysées was a huge success, garnering them contracts for tours in Europe and Southeast Asia as well as in North America (with Sol Hurok, the well-known American impresario). After eight years, the troupe had to be dismantled and a new troupe was formed in 1938 by which time the young Ravi had seen a lot of changes.

During the first five years of his life outside India, Ravi grew up among sophisticates of cosmopolitan centers (Paris, London, Los Angeles and New York to name a few), his mother having returned to Benares within two years of life in Paris. Ravi studied French and also absorbed a great deal of Western classical music, witnessing great performers of the era, including the young prodigy Yehudi, Enesco, Heifetz, Kreisler, Segovia, Toscanini and Casals, (all good friends of Uday). Ravi was fascinated with Jazz while in New York and got exposed to giants such as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong. It was in Hollywood, after meeting Clark Gable and Joan Crawford that young Ravi discovered his lifelong passion for ‘the Cinema’ concurrently learning the ‘Western customs’, and ‘how to present Indian culture to the world at large’. Young Ravi’s many roles during this period.

Ravi did try occasional dance roles in the troupe, and even choreographed a solo (‘Chitra Sena’) based on his understanding of the elements of Kathak dance. However, he mostly accompanied

⁴ *‘Uday Shankar’, ‘the legendary bringer of Indian dance and music to the West’, wrote James Aloysius Joyce, a renowned literary critic, Irish novelist & poet, and a contributor to the modernist avant-garde. Uday was not a formal student of dance, as Ravi writes rather politely, and reportedly started off as a student of Royal College of Art, London. His fascination for mythology and Indian sculptures made him imitate godly poses, albeit not a trained dancer. His first dance performance in 1922 in front of King George V and the King’s appreciation took him to the major breakthrough of meeting Anna Pavlova (1881-1931) - a Russian prima ballerina of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. She was a principal artist of the Imperial Russian Ballet and the Ballets Russes of Sergei Diaghilev.*

⁵ *Alice Boner (1889-1981), a wealthy Swiss painter and sculptress subsidized Uday’s career, helping organize his first tour of India.*

Sitar developing a basic feel for the instrument though not exposed to any serious training or classical performance that would create a serious urge in him to delve deeply into the technique or nuances of the instrument.

Jhala:

In 1934, Uday was able to convince the Maharaja of Maihar to permit Baba (the lead musician in the Maharaja's court) to join the troupe, as the featured instrumental soloist, for a year of world tour. A reluctant Baba joined them at the request of the Maharaja. That was a when Ravi's formal music training started with the most serious teacher, Baba who was both revered and feared. Ravi remembers that his training started in 1935, on the ship, as soon as his long journey to Paris commenced. As the tour was demanding and young Ravi often seemed distracted, Baba gave the ultimatum that if Ravi was serious about learning music, he would have to abandon everything including high life and limelight and go to his Ashram in India for intensive and formal training.

Ravi went through tough times upon return to India in 1938, first, due his mother's passing away (in November 1936) when he could not even come back for her final rites, a devastating loss because of his close emotional connection to her. Then came the news of the murder of Ravi's father [who was working in London, as a barrister at the Privy council (of England) on a controversial legal dispute]. The fact that the assailant was never identified, shattered young Ravi more than the loss. Bereft of parents and rudderless, Ravi struggled between the prospects of becoming a professional dancer or a classical musician. With a hostile political climate exacerbated by the impending World War II, the prospect for cultural tours, even within India, became more difficult. This, in a way

helped young Ravi follow his intuition, give up his dance career and approach Baba to accept him as a serious student in his music ashram. Thus, before leaving home for Gurukul⁶ in Maihar, Ravi underwent sacred-thread ceremony shaving his head and left with minimum belongings to a life of austerity and discipline.

For the next six years, Ravi studied with Baba in the formal guru-shishya tradition, receiving basic technical training by vocal transmission and repetition of Ragás, many of which Baba had composed himself. Ravi learned the Senia-dhrupad instrumental style (aka Maihar gharana⁷) originally developed in the 16th century by legendary Tan Sen⁸, applying the techniques of older dhrupad instruments such as the Rudra-Vina to the Sitar and Surbahar. As with the other students at Maihar, Ravi's practice regimen lasted up to eighteen hours a day. Sometimes Ravi would be taught alone, other times he would train alongside Baba's son and daughter - Ali Akbar Khan ('Akbar') on Sarod and Annapurna Devi on Surbahar (Devi would later become Ravi's wife.) Ravi and Akbar continued their training with Baba while also acquiring more experience as live performers, refining their instrumental dhrupad style of Alap-Jhor-Jhala and assimilating the khayal approach of vilambit (slow tempo) and drut (fast tempo) gats. They also became proficient in the advanced rhythmic vocabulary of Baba, an accomplished drummer who had mastered most of the percussion instruments. Ravi began performing publicly on Sitar in 1939 and his debut was a jugalbandi (duet) with Akbar on Sarod.

Baba used a wide array of 'Korvais' or 'sollu' (rhythmic solfa cycles) from Karnatak Sangit (never before used in north Indian music) inducing the curiosity and instilling passion in Ravi to incorporate South Indian talas into his music, going forward.

⁶ Gurukul (meaning, seminary) has been the most ancient system or process known as Guru-Shishya (teacher-disciple) tradition of imparting knowledge.

⁷ Maihar gharana was developed and taught by Baba (Ustad Allauddin Khan) of Maihar (now part of central Madhya Pradesh). The followers of this gharana adhere to dhrupad and aesthetic in their approach to playing the alap and jor portions in a raga followed by a khayal style vilambit gat with taan improvisations, and the performance ends with a jhala.

⁸ Tansen (c. 1500-1586), aka 'Ramtanu', was often referred to as the father of modern Hindusthani music. Born in a Hindu family in 'Madhya Pradesh', he spent most of his adult life in the court of Raja Ramchandra Singh (who ruled Rewa, 1555-1592). Raja Ramchandra Singh acceded to the request of Emperor Akbar and encouraged the reluctant Tansen to serve in Akbar's court to propagate Hindusthani Music. The staunchly Hindu musician Tansen joined the Akbar court in 1562 and his performances over the next two decades became a subject of many court historians. Akbar declared him as one of the Navratans (nine jewels), and gave him the honorific title Mian, meaning 'The learned man'.

Ravi learned one of the most profound lessons of life, about love and commitment, when he saw the loving side of Baba, given to angry outbursts at his other disciples for their mistakes and yet never raising his voice at Ravi, bound by the promise he had given to Ravi's mother to take care of Ravi.

Jod (Jhor):

Ravi left Maihar for Bombay in 1944 to become a professional musician. His first composition for Stage Productions was a ballet, 'India Immortal' produced by IPTA¹⁰ depicting modern history of India from the beginning of British occupation. His second production was based on Jawaharlal Nehru's (who later became the first Prime minister of liberated India) book 'The Discovery of India,' tracing historical evolution from the fourth century to pre-Independence era of India. Commissioned by the Indian National Theatre, it premiered in March 1947, to an appreciative audience including *Mahatma Gandhi*, Nehru, and many national leaders. In a rare public appearance, Lakshmi Shankar¹¹

(wife of Ravi's older brother, Rajendra Shankar) and Ravi's wife, Annapurna Devi¹² on Sitar were two noteworthy supporting performers. After seeing the adaptation of his work, Nehru reportedly commented that 'it was a better ballet than my work'. It was evident that Ravi's musical compositions were mature, guided by Uday's principles and including innovative usage of Indian rather than Western instruments and sound effects Ravi started composing new music in 1945, starting with a melody for *Sáre jahán se acchá, Hindusthán` hamará`* (our India is the best place out of all places), by Mohammed Iqbal, one of the great 20th century Urdu poets, celebrating a united India in 1904, long before the Partition of India. Ravi's re-tuning of the song in *Raga misra-Peelu*, in fast tempo, was featured in the movie *Dharti-ka-Laal*. Even after seventy-five years, this song in Ravi's tuning is still one of the most recognized and listened-to patriotic songs by/for Indians of all generations.

Ravi's respect for British culture was concurrent with his dislike for their barbaric colonialism

(due the brutal behavior of the policemen, army and the then ruling bureaucrats); he makes no effort to hide such feelings. Ravi's honesty catches one's attention when he confesses that he had limited knowledge of Indian politics and struggles, until he understood the acute paranoia of the British behind the ban of Chatterjee's 'Vande Mataram' (Hail to the Mother). This prompted him to read the banned book 'Ananda Math' in secret. This experience probably influenced Ravi, the healer of Bangladesh, an emerging nation torn by Liberation-War-Genocide, when he puts his magical music to phenomenal use by 'The Concert for Bangladesh' in 1971 in the company of 'the Beatle' George Harrison.



⁹ *Karnataka-Sangitam or 'Karnatak Sangit' was anglicized more than a hundred years ago as 'Carnatic Music' and it has gained currency to use this expression routinely. To remain pure to the roots and connotation, this article will refer to it only as 'Karnatak Sangit'.*

¹⁰ *Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) was formed in 1943 with the stated goal of bringing cultural awakening among the people of India and promoted themes relating to Indian Freedom Struggle.*

¹¹ *Lakshmi Shankar (1926-2013) was one of the noted Hindusthani classical vocalists of the 20th and 21st centuries; born to Bhimrao Sastri, noted Sanskritist and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi. Sastri was and co-editor of 'Harijan' which was deemed as Mahatma's voice and pen. Lakshmi, a classical dancer, joined Uday Shankar's troupe in Almora in 1939 and married in 1941, Ravi's elder brother Rajendra (also known as Raju). She gave up dancing and (with a strong background in Karnatak Sangit) pursued Hindusthani music, training under Ustad Abdul Rehman Khan and later under Ravi Shankar.*

¹² *Annapurna Devi (1927-2018) – originally Roshanara Khan but re-named by Maharaja Brijnath of Maihar – was daughter and disciple of Baba, married Ravi in 1941 and legally separated in 1982. Between 1946 and 1955, Annapurna appeared on stage with Ravi in several sitar-surbahar (bass-Sitar) duets. They had a son, Subhendra Shankar, also a musician ('Subho' as he was known, died in 1992 at 50 years of age).*

Gat(i):

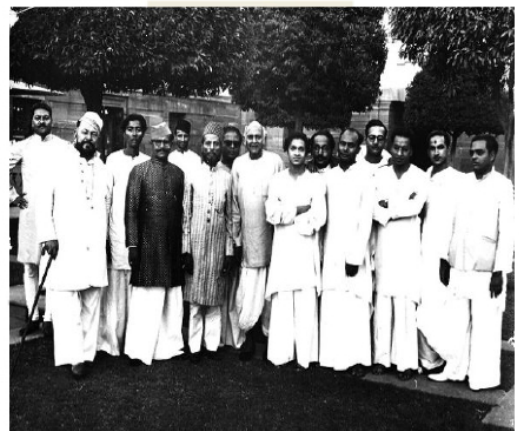
The creative, innovative spirit in young Ravi found its first expression in 1945. He identified and named his first Raga in Hindustani music in 1945, *Nat Bhairav*¹³, a heptatonic scale created from Bhairav thát. This scale is known as '*SarasAngi*', (27th melakarta Rágam) in Karnatak Sangit and "Harmonic major" scale, a popular one, in Western music. While most musicologist concode that 'Nat-Bhairav (or Nat-Bhairav) is relatively new melody to Hindustani system', few would be willing to credit Ravi Shankar for its "discovery" (from 'SarasAngi, the 27th Melakarta).

From May 1947, significant national events, affecting millions of Indians, were exacerbating Ravi's personal and artistic struggles. The milestone event of August 15, 1947 and the communal killings and upheaval, all around the nation, culminated in the shattering moment on 31st January 1948 with the tragic assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. Cancellations of performances, more personal problems at the family front and economic struggles of the artists associated with Ravi, forced Ravi to accept good Samaritans' help in organizing chamber concerts in place of canceled events.

Under such pressure from various sides, Ravi underwent a crises at all levels, (material, emotional and spritual) even questioning the need for his own existence! He carefully formulated a plan to end his life to the extend of facing a care and preparing final letters! But shortly before the 'chisen' day in 1948, an extraordinary encounter turned his life around. Passing by Ravi's home, a yogi known as 'Tat Baba' visited him. Entranced by the aura which seemed to surrounded the yogi, Ravi readily agreed to play the sitar for him, forgetting his commitment to perform for the prince of jodhpur that ver evening, for a large fee. Although Ravi never shared any of those details, the yogi seemed to know about Ravi's despair, mssing commitment and also the planned suicide, without any explanation or speech, he simply told Ravi, "*the money you missed tonight will come back to you many times over; also, don't do anything foolish, something Great awaits*". So commenced Ravi's spiritual turnaround with philosophical approach, steely resolve and faith in his own self. Ravi felt a strong inexplicable connection with Tat Baba, although he rarely

met him in the next 25 years and was grief stricken, as if losing his father, when Tat Baba attained "Samádhi"¹⁴ in 1973.

Ravi moved to Delhi to become the Music Director of All India Radio (AIR) in 1949, a position he held through 1956. When the announcement came in the end of 1948, amidst felicitations, many questioned the singular honor conferred on the 28-year old. (Ravi remains the youngest ever Music director of AIR). This was the start of a period of experimentation as Ravi inaugurated the 'Vádyá-Vrinda' (aka National Orchestra). His compositions for the orchestra included pieces based on the life of Mian Tansen, the father of Hindusthani music and founder of Senia gharana and The Three Full Moons, based on the life of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha. Despite strong orientation in and bias towards traditional Hindusthani classical system, Ravi often rearranged classical Ragás to be played by the Vadya Vrinda ensemble with Clarinet, Violin, and Cello. These experiments set the precedent for the two Sitar Concertos that he composed for full Western Orchestra. Ravi handed the famed Vadya Vrinda to the flutist Pannalal Ghosh and Sarodist Aashish Khan (the oldest son of Ali Akbar Khan) to follow the tradition.



¹³ While other Hindusthani musicians started adopting this new scale (Nat-Bhairav) in Hindusthani concerts, Ravi recorded his discovery years later on a World Pacific LP vinyl, entitled 'A morning Raga/An Evening Raga' (1968). Some Indian newspapers misquote this Rag as the Karnatak-Sangit Raga 'Nata Bhairavi' (20th Melakarta).

¹⁴ A state of meditative consciousness reached by sAdhana; also loosely used while referring to the death of a holy person.

Ravi made his major impact in the Indian film industry as a music director and wrote the score for *Apu Trilogy*¹⁵ which earned him national and international fame and respect, an achievement crowned by an Oscar nomination for best original score, for his music in Sir Richard Attenborough's masterpiece, *Gandhi*, in 1983. However, Ravi considered *Pather Panchali* his favorite and one of the best scores he ever composed.

The years 1945 to 1959, though demanding, brought international acclaim to Ravi. While continuing with music direction to the sequels of *Pather Panchali*, Ravi accepted an invitation in 1954 to be part of a cultural delegation of Indian Musicians and dancers to the Soviet Union traveling to Moscow, Leningrad, Armenia, Georgia, Kiev and Uzbekistan. Whereas Ravi's earlier tours with his brother Uday in 1930s and 1940s offered only glimpses of Indian dances and Music to the Western world, Ravi's movies with Ray showcased the Indian fine arts in a way the elegant nuances of the art forms could be better understood and appreciated by the global audience. His tour of the Soviet Union gave Ravi the opportunity to test his skills as the Musical Ambassador (of India) to the world at large as he began preceding every performance with a brief introduction on Indian Music. Concurrently, Ravi and his troupe also had the chance to experience Russian music and dance, more particularly the Bolshoi Ballet performances of *Swan Lake*.

From the 1930s to the 1950s, a small number of Bharata Natyam dancers and *Karnatak Sangita vidwans* toured Rangoon (in Modern day Myanmar), Malay states (Modern Malaysia and Singapore) and Colombo (Modern Sri Lanka) and to Japan.

Veena Balachander was the first South Indian soloist to visit the USSR in 1957; he visited the USA with Flute N. Ramani in 1961. We will review Ravi's global outreach from his 1954 Soviet tour in the context of "opening the doors" to the West for the future musicians of both genres.

Before the 1950s, Indian Classical Music – with its highly improvised melodic excursions, complex percussion rhythms and impromptu responses – was virtually unknown in America(s). Pulitzer Prize finalist and classical music critic *Mark Swed wrote of Ravi, '....If Ravi had done nothing more than compose the scores for Apu Trilogy in the 1950s, he would still be remembered and revered'*. His ascent to international stardom and as an Introducer of Indian music to the international audience was cemented by his visit to Soviet Union as an Indian Musician during the 1950s and as a soloist in Western Europe and the United States.

Ralph Martson¹⁶ wrote in 2004, 'Success feeds success', probably inspired by Kathryn A. Knox, the columnist for *The Christian Science Monitor*, who wrote in 1988 on 'Success feeds Success' while recording her impressions on Dale Carnegie and his writing on 'teaching freshman composition'. While I cannot surmise Ravi read such motivational writers and thinkers, his practical life led him into the right formula to motivate the artists around him and rally them as one troupe, one team and in one goal for success. *Depressing times and hardships seemed not to bother him anymore and he was the busiest musician by late nineteen fifties.*

GLAM & GLOW

Threading | Waxing | Facials



9272 Miramar Rd San Diego 92126
Ph#8584330547 | www.MyGlamAndGlow.Com

¹⁵ *The Apu Trilogy* comprises three Bengali language films directed by Bharat Ratna Satyajit Ray (1921-1992), the internationally acclaimed as one of the greatest filmmakers of all time. Ray directed 36 films during his lifetime and his very first film, *Pather Panchali* (1955), won eleven international awards, including the inaugural Best Human Document award at the 1956 Cannes Film Festival. This film, along with *Aparajito* (1956) and *Apur-Sansar (The World of Apu)* (1959), formed *The Apu Trilogy*.

¹⁶ *Ralph S Marston, Jr.* writer for *The Daily Motivator* is not to be mistaken with *Ralph Martson* (1907-1967) who was a professional NFL player with the *Boston Bulldogs* in 1929.

Introducing Complex Indian Music to the West & the global audience:

Ravi acknowledges, with gratitude, the exposure that his friend Louis De San, a diplomat in Belgian embassy in Delhi, gave to him and to his music. Louis would often invite Ravi to perform for visiting ambassadors and foreign ministers of global Nations. Ravi decided, at the first such occasion, to start with a 5-10-minute introduction outlining the structure of a 'Raga' and emphasizing how Indian music differs from harmonically based Western music. Ravi was best suited for such overview, as he was fluent in English and French. The private audience was mesmerized every time, as they felt that they 'understood' how to appreciate Indian music. Gradually, a series of recitals and talks were scheduled throughout Delhi for a growing number of diplomats and other visiting dignitaries from Western hemisphere. Ravi's stature as the music director of AIR, the national Radio, at the Indian capital was additionally conducive to this projection. The Cognizant's appreciation and encouragement for this form of presentation increased Ravi's self-confidence and renewed a sense of purpose in him, enforcing his belief that Western audiences would be open to hearing and learning about Indian Classical Music, if only they were properly educated. His visit to the Soviet Union showcased his acumen as the Ambassador of Indian Music and set the stage for future

and north Indian based musicians with the ability to explain the complex Indian Music in simple terms and expressions.

Ravi was introduced to Yehudi Menuhin during latter's first visit to India in 1952. The following year, Menuhin became the president of the Asian Music Circle in London ('The Circle'), an organization founded by the famous writer Ayana Angadi¹⁷ and Patricia Clarke (who would, later, introduce Ravi to the famous 'Beatle' George Harrison in Angadi's home in 1966). The Circle organized concerts and lectures of Asian Music and dance throughout the West and its leader Yehudi returned, from India, with great passion to educate as many people as possible about Indian music (and Yoga). After Yehudi's second nationwide tour of India in 1954, he invited Ravi to present Indian classical music in an organized way, in an Indian Festival, co-sponsored by the Ford Foundation and Rockefeller's Asia Society in New York in 1955. Ravi, desirous of preserving his family, which was going through a difficult phase at that time, recommended (his brother in law) Akbar to Yehudi, instead. Ravi had to convince a very reluctant Yehudi (who had not heard a 'Sarodist' until then) and thus was responsible for yet another milestone event in the history of Indian music in the West.

Akbar and Chatur Lal (Tabla) performed along with Shanta Rao, a Bharat Natyam dancer, and Pather Panchali was shown at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York to an ecstatic global audience. Ravi left AIR in 1956 on his first Western tour as a Classical musician performing in Great Britain, Germany, and finally the United States. The 1956 LP album 'Three Ragas' - Ravi's first - was an excellent introduction to the medium of Indian Music. Ravi wrote his own liner (aka sleeve) notes for the album. An outstanding treatment of Raga Jog was followed by Raga Ahir Bhairav; and, Raga Simhendra Madhyamam, beginning his lifelong practice of incorporating Karnatak Ragas into his repertoire almost routinely.

- **Jog:** This pentatonic Raga is based on Tilang (in Karnatak Sangit) akin to 'Gambheera náttai' (a derivative of 36th mela, Chala-náTa). Jog became one of Ravi's favorites and popular with other musicians since then.
- **Ahir Bhairav:** A mixture of Bhairav and (a Karnatak) Raga Ahiri (derivative of 14th Mela -VakuLabharanam; also averred by some Hindusthani singers as a mixture of Bhairav and Kafi. The 16th Mela, Chakravákam, closely resembles Ahir Bhairav.
- **Simhendra - Madhyamam:** This 57th *melakarta Rágam*, is equivalent to 'Hungarian Minor' or 'Gypsy minor' in Western music.

¹⁷ Ayana Angadi (1903-1993) and his wife Patricia Fell-Clarke established the Asian Music Circle in Britain, in 1946. This organization introduced Indian music, dance and yoga to the British public, paving the way for musicians such as Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan.

His introduction to George Avakian of Columbia Records led to the recording of *'The Sounds of India'* in 1957, released only in 1968. In this recording, Ravi was accompanied by Chatur Lal on tabla and contained Ravi's own explanations of 'Raga' and 'tala' with musical samples as introduction to Indian music following his concert format of that time. The three Ragas *Bihag*, *Bhimpalasi* and *'Sindhi'*-Bhairavi¹⁸ all begin with Ravi's demonstrations of scale and rhythmic cycle. This introduced the Sindhi-Bhairavi scale to Western musicians who subsequently adopted it in Jazz, Pop, Reggae and many other free forms of music. Ravi's magic of this Raga was repeated several times with other stalwarts in world stages and one such rendition available on the YouTube is the 1984 Durgapur concert featuring Ravi on Sitar, Akbar on Sarod, with the father and son duo, Alla Rakha¹⁹ and Zakir Hussain²⁰, on Tabla.

Ravi takes Indian Music to Global musicians

Ravi initially attracted a small audience in America mainly of jazz musicians, of the post-bebop²¹ and avant-garde jazz²² genre, who had developed an interest in non-Western 'Musics' and were instantly attracted to the improvisation potential and modal structure of Indian Classical Music. No wonder Ravi became friends with great musicians such as John²³ Coltrane and later with Alice²⁴ Coltrane (aka Swámini TuriaSangitánanda) and also collaborated with Bud Shank²⁵. During Ravi's first California tour, he became friends with the famous Jazz producer Richard Bock, founder of World Pacific Records where most of Ravi's catalog was recorded in the 1950s and 1960s. Bock introduced Ravi to John Coltrane, David Crosby and Roger McGuinn (who recorded as 'Byrds'). Ravi's collaboration with Jim Dickson and Crosby gave Dickson his first exposure to Indian Classical music, which Byrds incorporated into their work thus introducing Ravi's music to their friend George Harrison of the Beatles.

¹⁸ There is no unanimity among Karnatak and Hindusthani musicians as to the question whether 'Sindhi-Bhairavi' of Hindusthani system popularized by Ravi is the same as the 'Sindhu-bhairavi' from the Karnatak Sangit scheme, while however the ascending and descending patterns and the treatment sound the same!

¹⁹ Ustad Alla Rakha Qureshi (1919-2000), popularly known as Alla Rakha, was one of the greatest Tabla maestros of the 20th century.

²⁰ Padma Bhushan Ustad Zakir Hussain (b. 1951) is an Indian Tabla virtuoso, composer, percussionist, music producer, film actor and eldest son of legendary tabla player Ustad Allah Rakha..

²¹ **Bebop (or Bop)** is a style of jazz that developed in the 1940s and is characterized by improvisation, fast tempos, rhythmic unpredictability, and harmonic complexity. World War II brought an end to the heyday of swing and saw the beginnings of bebop. Big bands began to shrivel as musicians were sent overseas to fight. While earlier Jazz was essentially diatonic, the Bop version was chromatic increasing the harmonic territory to the Jazz soloist. It also broke up the metronomic regularity of the drummer's rhythmic pulse resulting in complicated improvisation.

²² **Avant-garde jazz** originated in the mid- to late 1950s among a group of improvisors who rejected the conventions of bebop and post-bop in an effort to blur the division between the written and the spontaneous. It came to be applied to music differing from free jazz, emphasizing structure and organization by the use of composed melodies, shifting but nevertheless predetermined meters and tonalities, and distinctions between soloists and accompaniment.

²³ **John W Coltrane** (1926-1967) was one of the greatest American Jazz saxophonists and composer; started with Bebop and Hard bop idioms but pioneered the use of modes and became the forefront of free jazz & avant-garde Jazz. He led some of the finest collections including those of trumpeter Miles Davis and Pianist Thelonious Monk. He was awarded many posthumous awards including canonization by African Orthodox Church and Pulitzer Prize. John named his son Ravi Coltrane, after his guru Ravi from whom he learned Indian philosophy, improvisational techniques, a repertoire of ragas and complex talas from 1964 through 1967.

²⁴ **Alice Coltrane** (née McLeod/1937-2007), also known by her adopted Sanskrit name Turiyasangitananda or Turiya Alice Coltrane, was an American pianist, vocal and harpist in jazz genre and composer who became a Swamini after the death of his husband John Coltrane. One of the few harpists in the history of jazz, she recorded many albums as a bandleader, beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s for Impulse! and other major record labels.

²⁵ **Bud Shank** (1926-2009) was one of the great alto saxophonists and flautist, known for his tenor and baritone saxophone compositions. He rose to prominence in the early 1950s with Stanley Kenton's *Innovations* and was known for Harlem Nocturne and Mike Hammer. His alto flute solo in *California Dreaming* (by Mamas & the Papas) is still remembered.

Ravi's experiments and select recordings of the decade 1956-1965

The next few albums/releases since the advent of 'Three Rāgas (1956) – over a decade show Ravi's penchant for exposition of both Hindustani and Karnatak systems of music.

- 'India's Master Musician (1959)' released by World Pacific as Ravi's solo album with Chatur Lal on Tabla. After a Holi song in Kafi and a Dhun in folk tune, Ravi gives equal time for Mishra Peelu and Puriya Dhanashri. Encouraged by the response to the 1956 introduction of 'Simhendra madhyamam', Ravi gives an exquisite rendition of another Karnatak Sangit Raga 'Charukeshi', offering this raga of multi-layered emotions to the global musicians for adoption. Jazz and Blues readily followed; Hindusthani vocalists are equally thrilled with this addition.
- "India's Most Distinguished Musician in Concert" was a live concert in UCLA on November 1961 – an early seminal performance at UCLA introducing Indian Music to the younger generation of America curious about India. It was remastered and released by Angel in 1962 - with two pieces, first an elaborate Madhuvanti²⁶ and the second, a dhun in Mishra Mánd.
- World Pacific's "Improvisations (1962)" was declared a 'visionary recording' by AllMusic reviewer, Heather Phares. The opening piece, based on music from Ravi's score for Satyajit-Ray's²⁷ 1955 movie Pather-Panchali, has Western flutist Bud Shank playing in alto 'Bansuri-style'. Ravi composed 'Fire Night' (based on Raga Dhani (Suddh-dhanyasi in Karnatak) influenced by the 1961 Los Angeles fires; the song features jazz musicians Bud Shank (flute) and Gary Peacock (bass) improvising over Indian percussion instruments with a touch of western drums. The concluding ragas are in classical Indian style: the first raga, Kirvani, or 'Keeravani' from Karnatak Sangit

²⁶ *Rāga Madhuvanti is a fairly recent melody in Hindusthani; earlier it was known as Rāga Ambika (of thodi thāt); Madhuvanti in Karnatak style is a derivative of 59th Mela 'Dharmavati'.*

²⁷ *Satyajit Ray, one of the greatest film makers of all time, directed 36 films, most of which are full of humanism and universality with deceptive simplicity nevertheless with deep complexity.*

²⁸ *Hamsadhwani (M 29) is a pentatonic raga from Karnatak Sangit that migrated to the Hindusthani world thanks to Aman Ali Khan and Amir Khan and popularized by Ravi.*

²⁹ *Chakravákam – named after the sound/call of 'c`akraváka' bird (migratory Himalayan bird, Brahminy duck aka Ruddy Shelduck).*

³⁰ *The opera buffa (first performed on January 26, 1790) by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), a prolific and influential composer of the Classical period, (the short title, Cosi Fan Tutte) literally meant 'so do they all' using the feminine plural 'tutte' to indicate 'women' (loosely translated in English 'women are like that').*

(equivalent to Harmonic Minor in the Western scale), and the second (an elaborate) Rageshri with *Alap, Jor and Gat*.

- In 'Music of India' (1962), released by HMV (remastered in 1964 by World Pacific), Ravi starts with *Rāga Hamsadhwani*²⁸ (another one of his favorites from Karnatak Sangit), followed by a dhun in Kafi and a fairly elaborate Rāga Rámkali.
- 'Ravi Shankar (1963)' released by Odeon has three gems; Hema-Bihag and Mishra-Mand from Hindusthani system and a Raga from Karnatak System '*Malaya Mārutam*', a janyam of 16th Melam, 'C(h)akravákam'²⁹.

Several more recordings and remastered performances from prior live presentations and in many other variations and names followed, increasing the awareness of global the musicians and global music fans, to the abundant possibilities of Indian Music system.

Bath Festival, Yehudi Menuhin Collaborations and Grammy

In 1959, Yehudi assumed 'artistic responsibility' for Bath Festival in England, one of the most prestigious classical music festivals (alongside Edinburgh Festival). Ravi's performance of Indian music at Bath festival on Yehudi's invitation was so well-received by the global fans that Ravi returned to Bath as a solo performer throughout the early 1960s. By 1966, Yehudi became the full-fledged Artistic Director of the Festival and marked the grand occasion by not only offering & conducting his first opera, Mozart's *Cosi Fan tutte*³⁰ but also taking a plunge into the improvisational and microtonal language of Indian Music by performing a 'Sitar-Violin' duet with Ravi on June 25, 1966.

After this collaboration that seemed inevitable from the day they met 14 years earlier, both realized that although they had come from different worlds, their commitment to music was very much the same.

Yehudi writes about 1966-Bath in his autobiography, *'...the visiting musicians Ravi, Alla Rakha and their entourage commenced the rehearsals at my hotel suite and transformed our quarters at the Lansdowne Hotel into a corner of Old Delhi...'* *'...everyone was seated on the floor, with Indian incense lit to create the 'proper' atmosphere and Indian food brought by Diana Menuhin eaten in the traditional fashion without silverware.'*

Ravi, dissatisfied with the commissioned Tilang³¹ conception by the German Pianist Peter Feuchtwanger, replaced it with his own, which was annotated by John Barham for Menuhin to follow and improvise. Yehudi was so dedicated that until the curtain time, he was practicing and improvising with Alla Rakha. While Yehudi began his rendition of the Bach solo partita with ease, when it came time to sit down in Indian dress and play 'Tilang', he was petrified. But, with the rush of adrenaline keeping him focused, he moved from his manuscript to improvise with Ravi and Alla Rakha with impeccable nonchalance, engaging in an exhilarating triangular call-and-response. As the musical conversation reached crescendo and the trip delivered the final 'tihai' to land on the downbeat, the audience erupted to thunderous applause shouting for an 'encore'. An initially hesitant Yehudi surprised himself with a more confident and exuberant encore! Thus, Yehudi succeeded not only in his mission to bring Indian Classical music to the West but also succeeded in meeting his next challenge of playing this complex music with a degree of authenticity.



Ravi Shankar, Yehudi Menuhin and Alla Rakha

The success of the Bath performance prompted the recording of the duo a series of "East meets West" For the first of three LPs, Ravi and Menuhin recorded a new performance of Raga Tilang with Ravi's revised composition entitled 'Swara Kakali'. Ravi composed a violin solo (for Yehudi) and Tabla (Alla Rakha) entitled "Prabhati³²" in a morning Raga Gunkali, based on master vocalist Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's³³ Goonkali'. The first *West Meets East* album won the 1967 Grammy for the 'Best Chamber Music Performance' - the same year that the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's* won Album of the Year, and Duke Ellington's *Far East Suite* won Best Instrumental Jazz Performance.

³¹ 'Tilang' is believed to have originated in Hindustani classical music and taken unto Karnatak Sangit. It is derived from Kamaj which is equivalent to the Harikambhoji (28th Melakarta). It is an audava-audava raga (pentatonic asymmetrical scale - two nishádams used). This scale is widely used in Blues and by Jazz musicians to great delight globally.

³² Prabhati, an innovation of Ravi (based on Bhairav thát), is similar to 'Malahari' of Karnatak Sangit (derived from Máyámálavagowla, 15th Melakarta); Raag Prabhati which is frequently used for Guru Granth Sangit is entirely different - derived from Bilawal thát.

³³ Padmabhushan Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1902-1968) one of all-time greats in Hindusthani Classical music is noted to have innovated his own gharana (style), Patiala-Kasur, amalgamating the best of three traditions of *Dhrupad, gyrations of *Jaipur and behlavas (embellishments) of *Gwalior. He was noted for very brief and stellar expositions of raga (contrary to convention or popular belief) and averred that the audience enjoyment is based on quick captivation and colorful assortment; he excelled in ragas such as Adana, Hameer, Jaijawanti, Jaunpuri and Bhupali all of which the Hindi-film-world gladly absorbed proliferating into a multitude of popular songs.

The year 1967 remains the only year in Grammy history where award-winning albums in all three categories of Classical Music, rock and jazz were influenced to some degree by *Indian music*. Two more installments of the *West Meets East* series followed, in 1968 and in 1976 (which will be addressed later in this article). Volume two would include the same composition based on Raga Pilu that Ravi and Yehudi performed for the United Nations in New York City, in celebration of Human Rights Day on December 10, 1967. That historic performance was televised around the world.

The significance of 1967 cannot be overstated in terms of Indian classical music being increasingly accessible to a Western audience, and Yehudi was, once again, one of the chief architects of this development. As one of the most respected Western musicians of the 20th century, Yehudi's wholehearted endorsement of Indian Music carried enormous weight, going a long way toward dispelling the previously held notion that it is less sophisticated or challenging than Western classical music. Although some claim that Indian music lacks harmony, "...*Western music lacks the melodic and rhythmic complexity of the Indian System*", as Yehudi would state in the liner notes³⁴ to the original *West Meets East*. The friendship between the two great musicians that began in India in 1952 was made stronger by their shared passion for music and mutual reverence that lasted until the death of Yehudi (in 1999). *Yehudi had done a lot to introduce Western audiences to Indian music for more than 40 years in the company of his dear friend and gave shape to Ravi's passion to take Indian Music to the four corners of the Earth.*

RAVI AND 'BEATLE' GEORGE HARRISON

By 1964, *Paul McCartney, John Lennon, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr*—a group of young musicians from Liverpool, England, who called themselves the Beatles—were the protagonists of a world phenomenon known as *Beatlemania* (referring to the

unprecedented levels of fame and commercial success that the band obtained). Moreover, the Beatles had become "a kind of spirit-level for trends in popular music, and were widely imitated in dress, attitude, and musical style." In 1966, still at the peak of their popularity, the group decided to stop performing live, and focused their attention on exploring new compositional and recording techniques in the studio. This led to what is often considered their most innovative and artistically accomplished period. Let us see what caused this!

Western interest in Ravi's instrument, the sitar, was kindled in 1965 when Harrison encountered one on the set of "*Help!*," the Beatles' second film. Harrison was intrigued by the instrument, with its small rounded body, long neck and resonating gourd at the top, and its complexity: with 6 or 7 melody strings and about 11 to 13 sympathetic strings, which are not played but which resonate freely as the other strings are plucked. Ravi accepted Harrison as his disciple, and by September 1966 Harrison traveled to Bombay for formal lessons, learned its rudiments and used it that year on a Beatles recording, "*Norwegian Wood.*" This followed the Beatles' 'Love You To', the first of Harrison's songs composed (based on raga Kāfi)

³³ *Padmabhushan Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1902-1968) one of all-time greats in Hindusthani Classical music is noted to have innovated his own gharana (style), Patiala-Kasur, amalgamating the best of three traditions of *Dhrupad, gyrations of *Jaipur and behlavas (embellishments) of *Gwalior. He was noted for very brief and stellar expositions of raga (contrary to convention or popular belief) and averred that the audience enjoyment is based on quick captivation and colorful assortment; he excelled in ragas such as Adana, Hameer, Jaijawanti, Jaunpuri and Bhupali all of which the Hindi-film-world gladly absorbed proliferating into a multitude of popular songs.*

³⁴ *With regard to its melodic and rhythmic construction, Indian Music represents beyond a doubt the most complex and elaborate organization of every possible succession of notes and subdivision and multiplication of rhythmic sequence. There is not a single known or possible scale which does not have a name, a function, a mood or a style of playing assigned to it in India; not a single mathematical relationship or proportion inherent in basic numerals which does not find expression in the pulse, the counter-rhythms and the structure of some improvisation. For instance, Ravi chose the Raga Gunkali for the piece Prabhati for solo violin and table - which is nearly identical with the national Japanese Scale. Others are equivalent to Western major and harmonic minor scales, to Greek modes, to those in Gypsy and Flamenco music and there are hundreds more, each expressing a different world of feeling and thought, of which the musicians in the West have never even heard.*

entirely on the Sitar with Tabla, Tanpura and Harrison providing lead vocals in addition to Sitar. The second song of the Indian trilogy, *'Within you, without you'*, Harrison's composition was complex combining Indian instruments by Indian musicians and a Western string ensemble in conversational texture (call and response interaction among instruments) – all within five minutes - in multiple *genres* (Khyal, bhajan, filmi, et al.) with an instrumental solo in 5-beat sequence (KhanDa naDai), 12,123,12,123...). It is somewhat ironic that the Indian Musical elements³⁵ in their post -1966 productions often go unnoticed!

The *Rolling Stones*, *the Animals*, *the Byrds* and other rock groups followed suit, although few went as far as Harrison, who recorded several songs on Beatles albums with Indian musicians rather than with his band mates. By the summer of 1967 the sitar was in vogue. At first, Ravi reveled in the attention his connection with popular culture had brought him, and he performed for huge audiences at the *Monterey International Pop Festival*³⁶ in 1967 and at *Woodstock* in 1969. But his reach went much further. Though Ravi acknowledged, with gratitude, his association with the early rock era providing greater exposure of his music, he came to regard his participation in "Rock festivals" as a mistake.

Ravi said in a 1985 interview,

"On one hand, I was lucky to have been there at a time when society was changing. And although much of the hippie movement seemed superficial, there was also a lot of sincerity in it, and a tremendous amount of energy. What disturbed me, though, was the use of drugs and the mixing of drugs with our (holy, ancient) music. And I was hurt by the idea that our classical music was treated as a fad - something that is very common in Western countries".

"But you know, many of those young people still come to our concerts. They have matured, they are free from drugs and they have a better attitude. And this makes me happy that I went through all that. I have come full circle."

On the flip side, it should be noted that *Beatles'* songs with Indian influences were met with remarkable commercial success. "Within You Without You" opens the Beatles' most critically acclaimed album (Sgt. Pepper's Lonely-Hearts Club Band), and their album *Revolver* (which includes "Love You To") became the number-one selling album in England and in the United States in 1966. Although the casual listener might be tempted to think that the influence from India in the Beatles songs is limited to Harrison's trilogy of "Indian songs," this analysis has revealed that influence to be far more pervasive in Rock (and roll), Pop ballads, psychedelic rock and classical rock music after 1965. One of the defining factors that made the Beatles' approach to Indian musical elements different from that of their contemporaries, was that unlike all other pop musicians of the time who saw Indian music as a temporary fashion, the Beatles, and especially Harrison - who traveled to Los Angeles in 1967 to help Ravi open a sitar school there - were dedicated to serious study of Indian music and culture. *This is the monumental transformation that Ravi brought to the western world.*

³⁵ "Tomorrow Never Knows" (1966), "Strawberry Fields Forever" (1967), "Lucy In the Sky With Diamonds" (1967), "Across the Universe" (1967), and "Here Comes the Sun" (1969). "Strawberry Fields Forever," perhaps one of their most accomplished singles, features a swar-mandal (a string instrument in Hindustani music similar to a harp) in an otherwise pop/ rock song. While "Here Comes the Sun," one of Harrison's most popular songs, does not incorporate Indian instruments, it uses 11/8- and 7/8-time-signatures in a manner commonly found in Indian classical music.

³⁶ Ravi 's appearance at the Monterey Festival marked a highpoint in the popularity of Indian classical music in the West, during a period when rock groups such as the Beatles, the Byrds and the Rolling Stones had increasingly adopted aspects of Ravi's music genre in their work. Adding to his own standing among Western youth, he had achieved fame for his role as sitar teacher to George Harrison, the Beatles' lead guitarist. Having moved to California in February 1967 due to the demand for his concerts in the United States, the festival was Ravi's first performance at a rock event, as well as the first event to combine the diverse elements of contemporary popular music in a festival setting. While Ravi admired the artistry and musicianship of some of his fellow performers on the three-day program, particularly Simon & Garfunkel, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and Otis Redding, he was appalled, however, at the sight of Hendrix setting fire to his electric guitar, and by the Who's destruction of their instruments at the end of their set. As a result, Shankar initially refused to take the stage. He was placated once the organizers rescheduled his set for the final day, a Sunday, when no other acts would be playing.

Ravi maintained his friendship and working relationship with Harrison, who released a recording of a 1972 performance by Ravi on the Beatles' Apple label. In 1974, Harrison produced a recording on his own Dark Horse label by a group billed as **Shankar Family and Friends** performing in a more popular style- short, bright-edged songs with vocals, rather than expansive instrumental improvisations. The "friends" included Harrison, listed in the credits as Hari Georgeson, as well as the bassist Klaus Voormann, the pianist Nicky Hopkins, the organist Billy Preston and the flutist Tom Scott. Ravi toured the United States with Harrison the same year. They last worked together in 1997, when Harrison produced Mr. Shankar's "Chants of India" CD for EMI. After Harrison's death in 2001, Ravi contributed a new composition to the "Concert for George," a starry celebration of Harrison's music staged at the Royal Albert Hall in London in 2002. The new piece, "Arpan," was performed by an ensemble of Indian and Western musicians led by Anoushka Shankar.

Ravi loved to mix the music of different cultures, nevertheless careful to remain faithful to the tenets of Indian Classical Music. In 1978, he collaborated with several prominent Japanese musicians – Hozan Yamamoto³⁷ (a Shakuhachi player) and Susumu Miyashita³⁸, a Koto³⁹ player on 'East Greets East', released by Deutsche Grammophon as 'Ravi Shankar in Japan' (1978). Following a rendition in Koto by Susumu ('PaDhaSaPa) and a Kaharwa by Alla Rakha, Ravi orchestrates the *Improvisation on the Theme of "Rokudan"* with Yamamoto on Shakuhachi and Susumu on Koto. It sounds similar to Raga Malahari (Janya of 15th Melakarta – Mayamalavagowla -Karnatak Sangit); '**Rokudan no Shirabe**' is reportedly the foremost composition for Koto in Japan's Classical music (created by ancient composer Kyoto, known as the father of modern Koto).

Other great renowned collaborators that Yehudi brought to Ravi are the great flautist Jean-Pierre Rampal⁴⁰

and composer Philip Glass. Even today, the third and final album in the West Meets East trilogy, "Ravi Shankar/Yehudi Menuhin/Jean-Pierre Rampal/Alla Rakha" *Improvisations* (HMV-1976) – is a class by itself. The four tracks '*Tenderness, Twilight, Enchanted Dawn and Morning Love*' are based on Ragas 'Nata-Bhairav', 'Puriya Dhanashri', Mian-ki-Todi and 'Nata-Bhairav variation'. The fourth track is a medley composition by the genius sculptor Ravi, **Nat-Bhairav-based**, with solos and improvisations from Ravi and Rampal, bringing out various melodies within the that complex. Alla Rakha joins the musicians experimenting with tonal shifts ('Graha-bedam') to create an enchantment experience. Alla Rakha then finishes with a solo when Ravi and Rampal join to conclude with a rhythmic-shift. The whole album has the support from **Martine Géliot**⁴¹

In 1988, Ravi's seven-movement "Swar Milan" was performed at the Palace of Culture in Moscow by an ensemble of 140 musicians, including the

³⁷ Hōzan Yamamoto (1937-2014) was a well-known player of Shakuhachi, an ancient Chinese and Japanese longitudinal, end-blown bamboo-flute introduced into Japan from China in the 7th C – and used by the monks of (Fuke sect of) Zen Buddhism for meditation. This is usually tuned in minor-pentatonic scale (corresponding to Raga Suddha-dhanyasi in Karnatak Sangit and Rag Dhani in Hindusthani Scale)

³⁸ Miyashita Susumu (1941~) son of Miyashita Shūretsu (1909-93) was a Koto Player and collaborated with Ravi in many recordings.

³⁹ The Koto is the national instrument of Japan - a stringed musical instrument derived from the Chinese *zheng*, and similar to the Mongolian *yatga* the Korean *gayageum*, the Vietnamese *đàn tranh*, and the *Sundanese kacapi*. It has 13 strings strung over 13 movable bridges and also has a current version with 17 strings and bridges. While it has no relationship with the Indian Santoor, the sonorific effect is similar.

⁴⁰ **Jean-Pierre Louis Rampal** (1922 - 2000) was a French classical flautist. He has been personally "credited with returning to the flute the popularity as a solo classical instrument it had not held since the 18th century. He is considered a legend in global classical music and collaborated with Ravi extensively, thanks to Yehudi.

⁴¹ **Martine Géliot** (1948-1988) rose to fame as a celebrated harpist, at a young age and performed with great names such as Ravi, Yehudi, Rampal, Jean-Jacques Kantorow, Patrick Gallois, Jacques Vandeville, James Galway and many prestigious conductors around the world.

Russian Folk Ensemble, members of the Moscow Philharmonic and the Ministry of Culture Chorus, as well as Ravi's group of Indian musicians. *"I have always had an instinct for doing new things," Ravi said in 1985. "Call it good or bad, I love to experiment."*

The great American composer Philip Glass⁴² collaborated with Ravi since 1965 through early 1990s in many ventures. The noteworthy album that brought together about 40 artists in 1990 was "Passages" with six tracks composed by Ravi and Glass (three each). *In the second track 'Sa-dha-ni-pa', Ravi uses a nice array of exquisite phrases of 'Kalavati' (known as 'Valaji' in Karnatak Sangit) with freedom supported by a generous orchestra.* The third track is a medley of orchestration between Ravi and Glass. The fourth track is a medley of many Minor scales brought in by Ravi with a generous touch of misra Peelu. The fifth track is a percussion medley supported by the rest. The last passage 'Prashanti', highly praised for years, is a collaboration between an avant-garde modern classical composer and a traditional Indian classical musician *par excellence* joined by many famous names in the global music scene including S.P. Balasubrahmanyam (aka 'Balu', the famous Indian singer in films who had recorded about 40,000 tracks) on vocals, employing instruments such as a Violin, Cello, Viola, alto Saxophone,

French horn, Tabla, alto flute, trombone, tenor Sax, sarod, veena, mridangam and allied percussions and many western violinists. Often the music is exotic and seems as unlikely as ice hockey on the River Styx (as Júlio Pimental comments) where both artists have taken intellectual approaches to (brilliant) Music with the symphony dominating soundscapes and highlighting Ravi's genius. *Once again, Ravi's passion to bring in Indian Music with Indians around to the global stage is evident.* When Balu concludes 'Prashanti' in mellifluous 'Yaman' with lyrics highlighting the prayer to Lord Shiva to confer 'Peace and prashantam ('tranquility'), with orchestra converging gently, there is indeed a pervasive tranquility that Ravi longed to express.

Ravi, the Creative & Adaptive Genius and the Global Cinema

Ravi always felt that he was an outsider in the Bollywood celluloid world, but he was in a class by himself and his own competitor. Whether it were Hrishikesh Mukherjee's abundant use of Sitar (Anuradha) or Satyajit Ray's kaleidoscopic classics, he was a winner all the way beyond the rarefied confines of mainstream classical. His first foray into celluloid world was accompanying the musical strains of Chetan Anand's Neecha Nagar which incorporated a blend of classical ragas and earthen flavors of folk later followed by Panther Panchali, and Apu Trilogy films whose music was described as "at once plaintive and exhilarating." Anecdotes have it that when Ravi met Ray, the tune Ravi was humming instantly became the signature theme of the film. The music of Pather Panchali evolved over long sessions, with Ravi indulging in abundant use of the bamboo flute and giving a free reign to the ragas Bhairavi and Todi in his compositions. Ray, despite frequent differences of opinion, gave Ravi his Space and Time.



Celebrate Womanhood,
Celebrate Beauty,
Celebrate India...
with our traditional fashion
jewelry and exquisite
dress collection!!

Embrace your inner Beauty!

☎ 657-456-4044
✉ navamcollections@gmail.com
👍 @navamcollections
📷 @navamcollections

⁴² *Phillip Glass (1937) is one of the great American composers and pianist. Associated with the minimalist school of composition, Glass founded the Philip Glass Ensemble, with which he still performs on keyboards. He has written numerous operas and musical theatre works, twelve symphonies, eleven concertos, eight string quartets and various other chamber music, and film scores. Three of his film scores have been nominated for Academy Awards.*

The movies Ravi wrote the music for, were varied in themes and backgrounds. Neecha Nagar was inspired by Maxim Gorky's "Lower Depths"; Dharti ke Lal was a mimetic art form on a short story by Krishan Chander. Pather Panchali and Kabuliwala were based on the works of **Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay** and **Rabindranath Tagore**, respectively. A little after 'Anuradha', Ravi worked for 'Godaan', Raaj Kumar-Kamini Kaushal starrer based on **Munshi Premchand's** work. The music caused mere ripples and Ravi decided to devote his energies fully to classical music. He returned only to direct the music for Meera, **Gulzar's** directorial venture, where he preferred to use the voice of **Vani Jayram** instead of **Lata Mangeshkar** in all the songs, helping the singer win the Filmfare award.

Ravi composed for films (including the **score** for Richard Attenborough's "Gandhi" in 1982 as its Music Director), ballets, electronic works and concertos for sitar and Western orchestras. As his popularity spread, societies for the presentation of Indian and other traditional music began springing up - the largest one in New York is the **World Music Institute** - and a thriving world music industry was soon born.

Ravi won the Oscar nomination for 'Best Original Music Score' for 'Gandhi', but the film did not win nominations for compositions. **Richard Attenborough** wrote, "...I know Pandit Ravi Shankar was very upset with me, *as I did not use his compositions in 'Gandhi.'* I thought that the London Philharmonic Orchestra would prove more effective than his music. *It was one of my biggest miscalculations*".

But in another magnificent yet silent action Ravi scores once again!

Lakshmi Shankar shared (in an interview in 2012) her awe and gratitude to Ravi and how he was instrumental in her singing for 'Gandhi'. Lakshmi remembered the moment, "*Oh...it was emotional... Raviji called me from Delhi and asked, 'Lakshmi, do you think you want to sing in Gandhi?'. I was stunned.... Ravi continued, 'Yes, I have suggested your name to Richard'....'they wanted MS Subbulakshmi, but I said that she won't be able to adjust to my style. I asked, 'What about Lakshmi Shankar?...they agreed now, and you are coming'.*

Lakshmi became the lead vocalist and her voice the auditory backdrop for some of the most significant moments of Gandhi's Life.

That scene in 'Gandhi' is an unforgettable shot in film history.....,

*"..It was January 30. 1949....Nathuram Godse walks to Birla house amidst the huge prayer crowd; Gandhi weakened by his hunger strikes, walks slowly through the adoring crowd; Godse bows before him, stands up with a Gun and shoots Gandhi several times. Gandhi falls to the ground uttering 'Hey Ram' and the screen fades to black. When the screen lights up, it is awash in a sea of humanity (created with 400,000 extras, a Guinness record) There are just two voices, one that of renowned American broadcaster Edward Murrow and the other, the beloved Lakshmi. When she weaves the notes in Raga traceable to 'Tilang', her voice is emotive yet unsentimental, sharp enough to prick one's conscience yet sweet enough to tug at your heart! *More than any speech, Lakshmi's soulful singing expresses the immense outpouring of love, devotion and sadness experienced by hundreds of millions around the world at the loss of the Mahatma. It was a divine union of the creator Ravi and the deliverer/voice - Lakshmi.**



From help with daily living to supporting your family's needs **this is home care.**

At FirstLight® we understand that finding balance between caring for your loved one, taking care of children, and managing a career can be difficult. That's why our caregivers are thoughtfully chosen and trained to provide exceptional care for you and your loved one—care that allows you to strengthen the family bond you already share. Whether it's listening to music with your loved one or running errands for you, we're here to help.

Call us today to discover what we can do for you or someone you love.

858-216-2040

NorthSanDiego.FirstLightHomeCare.com

HCO #374700207



Ravi & Sitar, the synonymous Duo, the Great Teacher & Globe - Trotter

The 1960s were demanding and rewarding, keeping globetrotting Ravi on toe. Amidst all that traveling, he taught (Indian and western) music and Sitar at the City College of New York and the University of California, Los Angeles and continued as a visiting lecturer at various colleges, universities (& also at Ali Akbar College of Music (1968-69) at Berkeley, CA). In 1970, he became the chair of the Indian-Music-Department of the California Institute of Arts. His August 1971 concert at Madison Square Garden, NY showed his patience and subtle humor that the crowds saw and started liking him for his persona as much as for his music. When the rock-music fans exploded to applause after a long tune-up by the artists before starting the concert, Ravi stated with smile, "if you liked our tuning so much, I hope you will enjoy our playing lot more". This album became one of the best-selling live recordings ever, winning Ravi the second Grammy Award.

Paul Hume⁴³, the great music critique and editor of Washington Post wrote,

"As for Shankar and the Sitar, they are extensions one of the other, each seeming to enter into the other's soul in one of the world's supreme musical arts. It is a thing inimitable, beyond words and forever new. For, as Shankar explained, 90 percent of all the music played was improvised".

[The writer met Paul Hume in 1978 at a reception (at the invitation of Dr. Lucius Williams Jr. the first African American Black Administrator) at the University of Mississippi, Jackson. The reception was to honor fearless journalists and distinguished music critiques including Paul Hume. The writer, young and 'fresh off the boat', had the first glimpse of Paul's in-depth understanding of Indian Music & musicians and Ravi Shankar in particular!]

⁴³ Paul Chandler Hume (1915-2001) was the music editor for *The Washington Post* from 1946 to 1982 (and an adjunct professor of music at Yale University from 1975 to 1983). He was a member of the American Association of University Professors, the Music Critics Association, and the Cosmos Club. He received a Peabody Award in 1977 for his outstanding achievement in music criticism. The writer had the opportunity to meet Paul Hume in 1978 at a reception (at the invitation of Dr. Lucius Williams Jr. the first African American Black Administrator) at the University of Mississippi, Jackson. The reception was honoring fearless journalists and critiques and the writer, 32, 'fresh off the boat' had the first glimpse of Paul's in-depth understanding of Music and Ravi Shankar in particular!

IFAASD Acknowledges the support of



**San Diego's Premier South Indian Cuisine.
Specializing in authentic sweets and catering to home,
office, and weddings parties.**

Sudha Katragadda
Ph: 858.284.9101
info@sannapurna.com
10606 Camino Ruiz, Ste 6 San Diego, CA 92126



Ravi's frequent travels weakened him resulting in a heart attack in November 1974, forcing him to cut short the tour. Ravi, however, was able to visit the White House on invitation of Jack Ford son of US President Gerald Ford in the company of George Harrison on December 13, 1974.

Shankar toured and taught for the remainder of the 1970s and the 1980s and released his second concerto, Raga Mala, conducted by Zubin Mehta, in 1981.

He performed in Moscow in 1988, with 140 musicians, including the Russian Folk Ensemble and members of the Moscow Philharmonic, along with his own group of Indian musicians. By then, Ravi, nominated by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986, was a member of the upper house of the Indian Parliament, a post he held until 1992. Ravi became even busier than ever in the late 1990s, performing about 30 to 40 concerts every year and accepted the position of Regents' Professor at University of California, San Diego in 1997.

Ravi's fascination for Karnatak-Sangit (Carnatic Music)

Ravi comments in his Ragamala (1999),

“..I fell in love with Carnatic Music (while) in Madras (Today's Chennai) at the age of 12 or 13 when I heard a great singer and Veena player 'Veena Dhanam'. 'It has therefore been extremely satisfying to have succeeded in popularizing among musicians in the North ragas such as 'Kirwani, Charukesi, Vachaspati, Simhendramadhyama, Nata-Bhairavi and many others which are all of Carnatic Origin. The Carnatic system's mathematical approach to rhythms and accurate application of them are also stunning. One of my greatest loves is for intricate sitar passages of mathematical precision filled with metric patterns and ending with complex tihais, all spontaneously improvised.”

“As the first Hindustani instrumental musician to perform regularly in Madras, over many years, I came to know all the great Carnatic musicians of their day, such as Tiger Varadacharya, Maharajapuram Viswanatham, Ariakudi Ramanujam Ayengar, the veena-player Karaikudi Sambashiva Aiyer, Palghat Mani on the mridangam, G.N.Balasubramanyam and a host of other giants. 'GNB' and I became good friends. I was lucky enough to receive admiration and love from all of them and from Madras audiences too.”

An emblematic Ravi Shankar concert would syncopate a dhrupad-kind of invocation, a mid-concert khayal for color, a Karnatak-sangit inspired climax and a brisk finale created from a semi-classical thumri or a folkish dhun. In the current, fast-paced life where the world can process only packaged information, instantaneous communication and instant gratification and where subtleties fall by the wayside, Ravi's passionate personality and love for Indian music (and in particular Karnatak Sangit) vouch for a celebration of Life amidst music and music as the food for Life. The pioneer musician 'created', and often 'innovated' melodies, tunes and christened his creations for the moods that they kindled in him.

Ravi's Creations/ discovery and Integrations of the Systems

Ravi was at once intrigued and fascinated by the very intricate and advanced music form of the South Indian style (Karnatak Sangit) and expressed his appreciation for the same as a teacher in many a University where he taught or many a world-theater he performed. With perfectly formatted (72) Melakartas or mother-melodies (Melakartas), sixteen swarasthanams (placements of pitch or Sruti) special to 'Karnatak-sangit' system, and with a likely possibility of 36,000 to 72,000 combinations or janya ragams or children or offshoots, Ravi felt compelled to expose the greatness of Karnatak Sangit not only to the Hindusthani musicians, who were willing, able and happy to expand on the available combinations, but to the global musicians by (a) repetition, (b) innovation,

(c) re-christening with marginal variations, and (d) composing in scales which only existed/exists as 'possibilities' and converting them into "actual melodies". The 'tala' (rhythmic time, musical measure) system of south Indian music fascinated Ravi. With his magical instrument giving shape to his divine dreams and innovations, and like an expert sculptor chiseling, Ravi started experimenting in 'ragas' with countless variations and creating new melodies resulting in about 140 albums, compilations, live performances of many magical creations with greater innovations each time.

Due to space and time constraints, we will review selectively some of his innovations/creations/discovery.

Janasammohini**(aka Janasammohini):**

Some purists from the Hindusthani tradition claim that this scale or prayóg was known as 'Shiv-Kalyan' although there is no reference is made in Raganidhi (by B. Subbarao) or by contemporary musicologists. It was Ravi who brought it out to the Hindusthani music world in 1960 as 'Janasammohini' from Karnatak Sangit (although the raga is known as Janasammohini in Karnatak-sangit paddati as a derivative of Harikámbohji – 28th Mela). Ravi, as the music director of the movie 'Anuradha', used this raga for Lata Mangeshkar's famous song, 'Haye Re Wo Din Kyun Naa aaye'. Many music directors have followed Ravi to use this hexatonic raga in films since then.

Paraméshwari:

Another hexatonic scale, a creation of Ravi from the (10th) Melakarta Ragam 'Nátakapriya'.

omitting Panoram. Some aficionados claim this to be a graha-bedam of Raga Chárukési. Well-suited to bring out Sringár and Bhakti ras (emotions), Paraméswari has often been used in film music, famous examples being (1) 'aur is dil me kya rakha' in 'Imándár' (1986) by Asha Bhosle and (2) 'teri umeed tera intezár' by Sanu and Sadhana-Sargam in Deewana (1992).

Kameshwari:

Some purists from the Hindusthani tradition claim that this scale or When Ravi was interviewed in the early 1970s, about his 'discovery' of new ragas, he explained, ".....the process of evolving new raga matrices" is as follows:

....."In March 1968, while making a film tentatively entitled 'That Which Colours The Mind is Raga', I conceived Kameshwari - similar to Saraswati of Karnatak (Sangit), except for the use of Komal Nishad in Aroha(na)".

.....From Kameshwari, by using Murchhana and Swara-Bheda (altering of tonic Sa), I discovered three more ragas - Gangeshwari (Morning), Rangeshwari (Evening) and Parameshwari (Morning).

.....The last named creates a tremendous effect of pathos and spiritual loneliness. It has overtones and beauty of such ragas as Bageshwari, Ahir Bhairav, Bilaskhani Todi and Sudh Bhairavi."

Gangéshwari:

Ravi, reportedly, first introduced this creation 'Gangéshwari' in 1968 for East meets West and it has been released in several remastered recordings. Gangéshwari – based on Ravi's favorite Karnatak Ragam Chárukési uses only S G3 M1 D1N2 S* in Aroha (omitting R and P) and utilizes all the avaroha notes of Chárukési. Film music directors were fascinated by Chárukési and started using it frequently, starting from 'Himalay Ki god Mein' (famous song 'Ek Tu Jo Mila' by Lata). After Ravi's introduction of Gangéshwari, later film songs switched to Gangéshwari.

Rangeshwari:

This raga is a derivative of 'Keeravani, omitting D & N in Arohana, and occasionally gracing N in ascending patters, and with a sampoorana descent in avaróha. A soft and melancholic evening raga rarely used in films or by later year musicians due to the challenging Aroha. The nearest equivalent is 'nága-deepika' in Karnatak scheme.

⁴⁴ B Subba Rao (1894-1985) an eminent musicologist and authority on Hindusthani and Karnatak Sangit wrote four volumes of Raga Nidhi which were reviewed by MB Niyogi and edited by Prof Vinayakrao Patwardhan, himself a great Hindusthani Sangit vidwan and musicologist.

Manamanjari (aka Manomanjari)

An inspiration from Raga, 'Rámapiya' (52nd Melakarta) with a generous use of ati-tivra nishad (N3) in Aláp, by sanchara, it is a combination of 'Marwa' and Kalavati with some liberties. Nikhil Banerjee⁴⁵ had popularized this raga from the 1970s.

Tilak Shyam

Introduced by Ravi in 1970, this raga's poorváng is like shyám Kalyán and by Tilak-kámód in uttarang using the two madhyams frequently and intricately in Drut. Ravi and Alla Rakha performed to a mesmerized Karnatak Sangit fans in Madras Music Academy in Chennai (then known as Madras) in 1971. The writer, despite little knowledge then, of the greatness of those two stalwarts, enjoyed the magic amidst the awe-struck audience. This raga became so sought after, that an album 'Tilak Ensemble'⁴⁶ recorded by GCI (as 'In Celebration Heights') was released in 1976.

Jogeshwari

A very melodious Raga, in the same string as other 'ragas ending in Shri', Jogeshwari is a fine blending of Raag Jog in Poorvang (like S G m ; G m (S)g S) and Raag Rageshree in Uttarang (like G m D m ; m D G m ; D n S' ; S' n D ; n D m).

"Ahir Lalit; Bhairagi; Bairagi Todi; Bhawani Bhairav; Banjara; Charu Kauns, Dhun-Rasiya; Gunji Kanhara; Kaushik Todi; Mishra Gara; Pancham Se Gara; Purvi Kalyan; Palas Kafi; Pilo Banjara; Raja Kalyan; Sanjh Kalyan; Shailangi ; Suvarna; Yaman Manjh".

⁴⁵ Nikhil Banerjee (1931-1986), a classical sitarist of Maihar Gharana and disciple of Baba Allaiddin Khan, later continued with Ali Akbar Khan son of Baba. One of the greatest artistic geniuses died (relatively at the young age of 54) of a heart attack. Nikhil, who respected Ravi immensely was once quipped and responded in an interview before his death, " Yes, I have been asked, 'You and Ravi Shankar being disciples of the same person, why are your styles and approaches to music different?' This is because (of) my teacher (who) understood; The first time I went to Baba Khan, the first thing my teacher said, 'I will channelize you in a different way, I will put you in a different way than Ravi Shankar. There will be no similarity'...'Pursue your path'.

⁴⁶ "Tilak Ensemble" featured Ravi with some of his students "Kartik Kumar, Deepak Choudhury, Sunil Kumar Das, and Shubhendra Rao" supporting him on sitar and Kumar Bose and Ishwar Lal providing Tabla support.

Mohan Kauns

Shortly after the assassination of Gandhi, Ravi was in a studio in Mumbai, preparing a live broadcast for All India Radio. The producer asked him to play something in honor of the Mahatma, and Ravi came up with Raga Mohan-Kauns, taking for a motif three notes from the Indian solfège, Ga Ni & Dha (Ga-N-dhi), (much as European composers use the notes B-A-C-H). This Raga is a combination of Raag Jog and Raag Malkauns in Uttarang. Very few maestros like Ustad Salamat Ali & Nazakat Ali Khan and Acharya Tanarang have used this raga.

Suranjani

A misra rāga of Bhairav (in Poorvanga) and Mánd (in uttaranga). It is derived from the 17th Melakarta, Sooryakántam, of Karnatak-Sangit, as per Pandit S.N. Ratanjankar.

Due to space constraints for the souvenir, I mention just the names of many other Ragas which Ravi created/innovated (utilizing his knowledge and fascination of many Karnatak-Sangit Ragams).

The Colossus that always remained a great Human Being

I remember reading (in 1978) the original 1968-autobiography of the 48-year-old Indian musician ('My Music, My Life') but the memory is sketchy on the details since I could not get a copy, later, in my life. I have to thank Ravi's companion Mrs. Sukanya Shankar, for gifting me with a copy of the famous 'Ragamala (1999)', the true autobiography of the Colossus of global music. This book is much less about the Ragas he created or those he exposed to the world of music, but a lot more about the life and transformation of a young traveling dancer from an ancient Indian town to that of a Legend of Indian Music who came to be recognized and honored with every prestigious award and title that any musician would ever care to covet.

Ravi was candid and fearless in his narration, transparent of his missteps and humble with his achievements, evident throughout Ragamala; thus, touching an emotional chord in the reader. His preface (written in 1997) – which he calls 'tuning' up – is a powerful self-analysis of a wandering monk who was often mistakenly perceived as a colorful personality living in ivory towers around the world.

Let me quote some of his poignant statements about himself and his life as it pushed him around!

Quote:

"By nature, I don't think of the past; I think always of the future. Yet in my seventy fifth year, the occasion for which this book was originally intended, there appeared to be some commotion being made about what I had achieved. This seems strange to me-although it makes me elated and grateful. I feel I have not been able to do more than a fraction of all the creative, musical and visual things that keep bubbling and brewing up in my mind. And sitting here in Encinitas, California, in this lovely house with such beauty all around, I do feel that I would like to stay on this planet longer in order to accomplish as much as possible. One of my big motivations is my daughter, Anoushka, who has all the lakshana (signs) of being a yoga patri - literally a 'suitable pot'. I want to train her and give her as much I can, so that she can carry on and travel much further along the never-ending path of our great music. People ask me always what I want to be remembered by, and I would like it to be not for my mistakes, but for the things that I was able to achieve - those that have touched the hearts of people been very lucky indeed to have gained recognition and appreciation almost all over the world. It has been my good fortune that there have never been any problems with communicating the greatness of our music. In places where the people had never even heard of it, nevertheless it has been instant success, and still there are warm receptions today everywhere I go. And what is the truth, anyway? It is beauty-in the eye of the beholder. The great Akira Kurosawa has shown this so wonderfully in his film Rashomon. Perspective plays a crucial role: I have tried to be as truthful as possible in stating the past and the present in relation to everyone and everything mentioned, including myself, but what I have told you here is the story of my life as I see it now. There is no doubt that I have contradicted myself at many times and in many places over the course of my life. It will even have happened in this book, I am sure, because of how I have written it - in various places (California, Delhi, London, Glasgow, Henley and on several trains and planes), at various times (between 1994 and 1997) and in various ways (sometimes writing with a pen, sometimes dictating onto a tape, sometimes annotating drafts). We all contradict ourselves, and inevitably so. You can all too easily write an autobiography in which you praise one person to the heavens - your lover, your cook, or whoever - and omit to mention another person who was years ago the object of all your plaudits. In another ten or twenty years you may have a different partner, a different chef, a different perspective. Nothing is permanent in this life, and I can say this with the true confidence of one who frequently goes through changes of heart!"

Some of my views expressed here would have been different fifty years ago or twenty-five years ago-sometimes last week! I make no apology for this because it is unavoidable, but it is always worth bearing in mind.

.....You will also notice that each of the chapters is named after a raga I have created. They are arranged in a sequence which follows the time theory associated with our North Indian Classical music system, beginning with an early-morning raga, Gangeshwari (doubly appropriate since the river Ganga is the lifeblood of Benares, where my life began), through afternoon, evening and night ragas to parameshwari, a raga of the very late night or early dawn. The epilogue is named after a dhun, a number in a lighter, folk style with which I usually end a concert."

..... I can never be thankful enough to God for leading me intact through such various paths of roses and thorns over seventy-seven years. Loving HIM and being greedy for his love, I pray for his grace and blessings for my remaining years".

Unquote:

Personal and family

Ravi's marriage with Annapurna Devi ended in the late 1960s. Their son and Ravi's disciple, Shubhendra Shankar, a noted sitarist, died in 1992. Ravi had relationships with Kamala Shastri, a dancer and Sue Jones, a concert producer, with whom he had a daughter, Norah Jones, in 1979. Norah is an American singer, song writer, pianist, actress and has won nine Grammy awards from sixteen nominations.

Ravi became a nomad, like many celebrity artists, from ten years of age. Fame, and greater fame always come with a price of disturbed family life. He was a globe trotter in the true sense of the term. He might have longed for a stable home and normal life, but circumstances took him places and contributed to the materialistic mess which he confesses to in 'Ragamala'. The domestic stability, sanity and happiness and a 'normal' life that he always yearned for, was provided by Sukanya who, in addition to becoming his dedicated companion, took over his material matters and brought a semblance of order; this included organizing his musical life and appropriate showcasing of his greatness to the admiring fans around the globe.

He married Sukanya Rajan in 1989 with whom he had a daughter Anoushka. *In the words of Ravi (1999), "...I have found great relief and comfort over the last few years since I married Sukanya. Not only are we completely in love with each other, but she has also relieved me of all mundane and worldly worries, especially by cleaning up the materialistic mess*

I had created over many years. She can be a hard taskmistress on occasions but is so tender and loving at the same time. Though it was late in my life that she became my wife, I am again thankful to God for bringing her to me".

In many respects, Ravi was a Bhairagi⁴⁷ or a wandering monk! Ravi was a sweet contradiction, which he admits, albeit indirectly; that he appeared to enjoy life more than many others of his era and yet, he was admired by some of his close associates such as George Harrison as a 'Sanyasi'ⁱⁿ in many respects, as he was often able, consciously or perforce, to 'detach himself not only from results but also from challenging situations' especially when *Life 'confounded' him.*

Anoushka Shankar (b. 1981), Ravi and Sukanya's daughter has been his torchbearer for almost 25 years. Anoushka gave her debut sitar performance at the age of 13 in New Delhi and started accompanying her father at concerts around the world. She signed her first exclusive recording contract with EMI/Angel when she was sixteen and released her first solo album, Anoushka, in 1998. She became, in 2003, the youngest-ever and first woman nominee for Grammy Award in the World Music Category for her album 'Live at Carnegie Hall'. In July 2010 she premiered Ravi's first symphony for sitar and orchestra with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at London's Royal Festival Hall and has performed multiple times under legendary conductors such as Zubin Mehta. Since 2003. She has been nominated **six times for Grammy awards** in the "Best World Music Category".

⁴⁷ Ravi introduced the Raga 'Revathi' as 'Bhairagi or Bhairagi Bhairav' due to the ethos it evokes in the singer and the listener. The word derived from 'Vairágya' also often connotes 'one who is free from world affairs'. Revati (aka Bhairagi) is often used for chants in India and the similar pentatonic melody in many countries for subtle, gentle and softer emotions.

Awards and Honors

The list is pages-long which few humans have, so far, surpassed; by the sheer number, variety, global reach and prestige associated with most of those International Awards and Titles.

Multiple Sangeet Natak Akademi (of India) recognitions from 1962 through the next 50 years, *Kalidas Samman* in (1988) and every civilian honor from the Government of India including the *Bharat Ratna* (1999) were the national honors conferred upon him.

Ramon Magsaysay, Commander of the Legion of Honour of France, Honorary Knight Commander of the Order of British Empire (KBE), and numerous honorary doctorates from many Universities in India and the United States. University of Melbourne, Australia conferred the Honorary Doctor of Laws. American Academy of Arts and Letters honored him. JD Rockefeller 3rd Fund, Berlin International Film Festival award (1957) UNESCO, Fukuoka Culture award (1991), Nomination for Academy Award, and Five Grammy Awards (1967 to 2013) including 'Lifetime Achievement Award' at 55th Annual and Posthumous nomination for the 56th Annual Grammy Awards.

Ravi became the "First Recipient of the Tagore Award in recognition of his Outstanding Contribution to Cultural Harmony and Universal Values (2013; posthumous).



Sukanya receiving the Tagore Award from the President of India Pranab Mukherjee with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh watching.



Ravi receiving Bharat Ratna from the President K R Narayanan

LINEAGE AND TORCHBEARERS OF THE GLOBAL MUSICIAN

Yehudi (The Right Honorable 'Lord Yehudi Menuhin', OM, KBE) wrote in 1998, "Ravi is the most wonderful teacher and guide, because he knows the technique".....

"Today, most of us in the West have lost that acute organization. Without a craft, without a command of your fingers, your eyes and all your senses, you cannot evolve in art. But nor are the means alone sufficient. In India everything follows an aesthetic which is totally missing in our world".....

"....the human being by nature must be a religious animal. But I think that if we survive long enough, we will learn from the Indians and their traditions, and go along a totally different world."

" Ravi represents enlightenment, organization, discipline – and yet such freedom – that which is won through a great deal of thought, work, practice and experience....."

"In many ways, he is the greatest musician I have known. If you are going to compare West and East on one footing, then he would come after my teacher Enesco and Bartok, but a close third".

The great 'Beatle' George Harrison who called Ravi 'The Godfather of World Music', said, "... I saw in him a quality that I had always aspired to. I never came anywhere near to what he does (practice); in fact, there isn't anyone I've ever heard of, in the West at least, who has got such brilliant musicianship.

"...he's always been like a Guru and a father figure... my life was enhanced and given much more depth through the ancient Indian culture, and Ravi was my contact with it..."

A lot of musicians from the East and the West who collaborated with Ravi since the 1950s for half a century genuinely felt/feel that they were his students in the true sense of the term. In addition to the greatest of global musicians from the Western world such as Yehudi, Harrison, and Zubin Mehta (b. 1936) - *the Conductor Emeritus of the LA Philharmonic (who called Ravi 'his Guru')* - scores of musicians formally learned from Ravi and several scores of musicians claimed that they were Ravi's students at some phases of his life. But, for the record, here is a short list of musicians who have performed for the special recording of his "Raga-creations" known as 'Shanka-Ragamala (2000)' for Ravi's 80th birthday celebration - Lakshmi Shankar (1926-2013); Vishwa Mohan Bhatt (b. 1950); Shamim Ahmed Khan (1938-2012), Manju Mehta (b.1944); Deepak Choudhury (1946-2009); Barun Kumar Pal (b.1948); Pandit Samaresh Chawdhury (b.1955); Kartik Seshadri (b. 1957); Partho Sarathy (b.1960s); Shubendra Rao (b.1964); Gaurav Mazumdar (b. 1966).

The Legend and the Legacy

A 'Legend' is defined by many, in many ways, often subjectively, but the Oxford English Dictionary defines Legend first as "the story of the life of a saint."

It may sound odd, here, to quote Steve Martin, 'The public has a short memory' (who expressed his annoyance on 'public' in a different context). But, it fits here, as we often tend to ignore consciously or otherwise, the greatest of contributions in the field of 'Fine Arts' by the greatest of men and women. It, therefore, becomes necessary to extol the life of great Legends and Maestros like Ravi by celebrating his life and highlighting his contributions, as the magical pied piper of India, who led or paved the way for a thousand musicians from India to the four corners of the Earth.

*Music may not have precisely
Saints But no musician alive is a
closer fit than Ravi*



- Thiruvaiyaru
S R Krishnan

