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EDITORIAL

We convey our heartiest regards to all our patrons and well wishers on the occasion of Bengali New Year's day and Bihu.

As you all know, our institution conducts an online cultural event, featuring vocal music, instrumental music, dance, recitation, painting etc. on the second and fourth Friday of every month and this cultural event is appreciated by art lovers and aficionados throughout India and abroad.

It is needless to mention that Padmashree Ustad Rashid Khan's music academy, Fifth Note Global Centre of Excellence, has very kindly condescended to collaborate and interact with Surnandan Bharati.

Ritish Chakravarty
Editor

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Pandit Birju Maharaj : The Kathak Maestro

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Pandit Birju Maharaj, is not merely a name, he is a milestone, an institution by himself and a torch bearer to the world of Kathak . Being born in the family of maestros, dance is in his DNA and experimentation is in his nature.

Initially named as 'Dukh Haran', Brijmohan Mishra, the very well known Kathak maestro, Pandit Birju Maharaj ji was born on 4th February 1938 in Handia tehsil of Allahabad. He is direct descendent of Ishwari Prasad ji the first known Kathak preacher. It is believed that Lord Krishna appeared in the dream of Ishwari Prasad ji and asked him to re-establish Kathak Nritya (Natwari). He passed this tradition of dance to Adguji, Kharguji and Tularamji, by teaching them the art of Kathak. Later on, they passed on their knowledge to their sons. Adguji had three sons, Prakashji, Dayalji and Harilalji. After the death of father, Prakashji came to Lucknow, alongwith his two brothers, and was appointed as the court dancer by Nawab Asafuddaulah. Prakashji had three sons – Maharaj Durga Prasad, Maharaj Thakur Prasad and Maharaj Maan Prasad. It is said that the King bestowed the title of 'Singh' upon Maanji who then became Maan Singhji.

Maharaj Thakur Prasad was the Kathak Guru of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah and it is said that he received four Palanquins full of money as Guru Dakshina. Thakur Prasad ji used to call his dance "natwari nritya" as it dealt with themes of Radha and Krishna, Natwar is other name of lord Krishna. In the court, Thakur Prasad ji enjoyed such a senior position that he was allowed to appear and dance before the nawab and the court, without his cap. Years later, Thakur Prasad relocated to Benaras and taught many of the famous courtesans of the city. Thereafter, Kalka Prasad ji and Bindadin Maharaj, sons of Durga Prasad, were also employed in the court of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, where they were recognized

for their exceptional talent.

Bindadin Maharaj started rigorous dance training at the age of nine years. He composed about 3000 Thumris and created beautiful Bhav on them. He along with brother Kalka Prasad were famous as' Kalka-Bindadin ki jodi' and 'Ram-Lakshman'. They both are known as the founders of modern-day Kathak. Kalka Maharaj had three sons - Acchan Maharaj, Lachhu Maharaj, and Shambhu Maharaj. Aacchan Maharaj received his training from Kalka Prasadji and Bindadinji and was an expert of Bhav, Laya as well as Taal.

Jagannath Maharaj, popularly known as Acchan Maharaj was the only brother, who received knowledge directly from his father as well as from his uncle Bindadin. When Bindadin and Kalika Prasad died, Acchan Maharaj took up the responsibility of training of his two brothers, Luchchu Maharaj and Shambhu Maharaj. Acchan Maharaj was a court dancer of several states of North India, and served for a long time at Raigarh. Being a talented kid of Kathak maestro Acchan Maharaj ji, at a very tender age Birju Maharaj's training started at home under the guidance of his father. The sound of the music and dance emanating from the classroom was enough to inspire him to devote himself wholeheartedly towards dance. Though he was too young to receive formal training, he used to watch carefully when his father taught his disciples. Very soon, Acchan Maharaj recognized his talent. At the age of six, he started travelling with his father across the country. His father performed at musical conferences all over India and by the age of seven, Birju Maharaj ji had accompanied him to Kanpur, Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Jaunpur, Dehradun, and even far off places like Madhubani, Kolkata and Mumbai. He got the opportunity to share the platform with his creative father, who allowed him to present a few pieces before his own arrival on stage. At such a tender age of seven, the Nawab of Rampur granted him a monthly salary of Rs 11. Later on when Acchan Maharaj ji shifted to Delhi to teach at Sangeet Bharti that time Birju Maharaj was only eight years old, enthusiastically observing and learning all activities at the centre. There only he became proficient at dancing, singing and playing tabla. But soon after, Acchan Maharaj ji shifted back to Lucknow with family due to the communal riots. On 20 May 1947, Acchan Maharaj left for his heavenly abode and with his death, Lucknow Gharana lost its foremost

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From the Tavern of Poetic Elixir - S. T. Coleridge

Jayanta Ray
Advisor : **Surnandan Bharati**

"A poem is that species of composition which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth;..." –exclaimed Coleridge in his Biographia Literaria, a famous book on the theory of literature. It is quite evident his views on poetic creation, it has no place of logic, argument, scientific analysis; only the joy of creation, fanciful

metrical exuberance of unbridled liberty.

Wordsworth and Coleridge may be adjudged as the pioneers of the era of Romantic Revivalism.If we call 'revivalism' it precludes that there was an age in literature as Romantic age and also that there was some age in between when romantic writings were subdued. The Elizabethan period saw Spenser as a poet, Marlowe and Shakespeare as play wrights and Bacon as prose writer who found liberty in imaginative ways through their romantic compositions. In the Augustan age there was a determined attempt to check unbridled emotional exuberance and instead express literature in a restrained manner with logic and reason. The period is known as the Age of Prose and Reason represented by Pope, Johnson and others. But readers' tastes in that mechanical mannered compositions did not find favour for long. An urge, therefore, came for revivalism of the aura of Elizabethan age with romance, nature, expression of beauty unfathomable. And, naturally, Coleridge became one of the pioneers of the age.

Intimate friendship between Wordsworth and Coleridge resulted in the publication of the 'Lyrical Ballads'. Although it was a small volume of joint production the poems represent the definite direction in unmistakable terms of the shape and direction of Romantic movement of the age, but the two poets' trends were distinct – Wordsworth found his expression in nature, Coleridge in the fanciful weaving of imagination and a sort of make-beliefart.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, born on 21 October, 1772 – died on 25 July, 1834, in

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Pandit Birju Maharaj : The Kathak Maestro

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representative. Unfortunately, that time Birju Maharaj was only 9 years old. The following years were full of struggle for him and his family but nothing could stop away Birju Maharaj ji from his devotion towards dance, he continued his training under guidance of his uncle Shambhu Maharaj ji. At the age of 13, he was invited to join Sangeet Bharti in Delhi to teach Kathak and soon he established himself as a good performer and dedicated teacher. At the age of 14 he started working at the Kathak Kendra of Sangeet Natak Akademi in Delhi and subsequently he became head of the department there.

It wasn't easy for the young boy to move from Lucknow to Delhi. In one of his interviews he mentioned that the white buildings in Connaught place all looked the same, and he used to get lost there. Then one day he saw Regal Cinema and made it his landmark to his institute. Maharaj ji, is an ideal bridge joining dance traditions of old darbars and present contemporary dance platforms.

He has danced in the courts of Awadh, has composed many thumris, hori and bhajans. His dance underlines the Lucknow Kalka-Bindadin gharana features of ang (physical beauty), layakari (lyrical melody) and abhinaya (mime).

At the age of 28, he received the Sangeet Natak Academy Award, besides several other prestigious awards like – Kalidas Samman, Nritya Choodamani, Andhra Ratna, Nritya Vilas, Adharshila Shikhar Samman, Soviet Land Nehru Award, Shiromani Samman, Rajiv Gandhi Peace Award. A recipient of the country's second highest civilian award – Padma Vibhushan. Pt. Birju Maharaj is a living legend and an institution himself. He has been conferred with Honorary Doctorate degrees from Banaras Hindu University and Khairagarh University.

As a choreographer, he is beyond any comparison, because of his bold, intellectual choreographies in traditional themes as well as contemporary concepts. Considering difficulties kids face in remembering the bols, he created many easy bols just like rhymes which are composed according to matras, and replaceable to original form, once kids become able to learn the actual. He has also simplified many bols for adults too using numbers. The list of his creations is endless as he spends every day in creating something new. He composes, sings thumris, bhajans and ghazals, is a well trained percussionist, writes poetry and paints. Many of his poems are published in Anubhuti and Brijshyam Kahe. Considering the difficulties faced by students in remembering and understanding Kathak posture, he has penned down a book "Anga Kavya" with diagrams and definitions.

Maharaj ji has a long association with Indian Cinema. He has worked for Satyajit Ray's Shatranj Ke Khiladi, Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Devdas and Bajirao Mastani, Kamal Haasan's Vishwaroopam and won many Filmfare and National Award too. He has created generation of Kathak Gurus and Exponents like Saswati Sen, Shobhna Narayan and many more for years. Post retirement, he started his institution "Kalashram" imparting proper training to future generations. Each and Every Indian is indebted to Maharaj ji for his enormous contribution in the field of Kathak and representation as cultural ambassador of India at international level.

From the Tavern of Poetic Elixir - S. T. Coleridge

Contd. from page 1

England was not only a great poet he was also a literary critic, philosopher and theologian. He was a member of the group of famous 'Lake Poets' also.

The territory in which Coleridge is the monarch is supernaturalism. He weaves his fancy and imaginative skill in such a manner that readers become tempted to believe in what is not real, they tend to fall as preys in an atmosphere of 'willing suspension of disbelief', a phrase coined by the poet.

His most notable poems, almost like story-telling, are 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', 'Christabel' and "Kubla Khan'. The first poem tells the story of sin and punishment through supernatural agency. "The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she/Who thicks man's blood with cold,..." which denotes something vague and horrible. And the end come with a loving note "He prayeth best who loveth best...".In Kubla Khan we discover the poet in a shadowy vision with a dream element. It has virtually no story, but bounds readers with the floating waves of the poet's mind. "It was a miracle of rare device/A sunny pleasure-dome with cages of ice." And in the last of the three we come across the story of an innocent maid Christabel visited by a demon in the guise of a beautiful woman named Geraldine who turns her voice into harsh from soft suddenly –"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine,/I have power to bid thee flee."

Facebook live programme of Surnandan Bharati

A marvelous bonanza was offered to listeners and music lovers by Surnandan Bharati on its facebook page. Surnandan Bharati is a centre where many students appear for examination and succeed in future. There are many followers in the facebook page of SNB.

The performers of January were Sarod player Bhabani Sankar Dasgupta of Kolkata; Singer Rubul Sharma of Diphu, Assam; Singer & Educationist K. D. Biswas of Jharkhand; Elocutionist Debanjan Mukherjee of Silchar; Singer Partha Pratim Das of Lumding; Artist

Pintu Das of Kolkata; Singer Amulya Sarkar of Tripura; Singer Mohiuzzaman Chowdhury of Dhaka; Dancer Priyanka Dasgupta of Nadia. For February the artists were Singer Sudipta Sekhar Mishra of Tripura; Dancer Dr. Pinki Purkayastha of Delhi NCR; Dancer Leena Rajendran of Gujarat; Dancer Samir Gupta of Lumding; Recitor Simantika Bhattacharya of Kolkata. The artists of March were Carnatic Singer Dhanya Rajesh of Gujarat; Singer Munna Banik & Paramita Podder of Tripura and Singer Rubul Sharma of Diphu, Assam.

-Sanchari Chowdhury

Old Age Home by Surnandan Bharati

Operational Model -
The total space accommodates 60 inmates in a space of 6600 sq.ft. The Home would contain two segments – Fully charitable wing & Semi-charitable wing. Fully Charitable wing caters to needy people who have no means of income and impoverished. We will provide them food, clothing & shelter at free of cost . Under this wing every subscription is Free Service wing caters to middle and upper classes of the society who demand certain facilities (such as air-conditioning, dietitian, personal caretakers) over and above the basic amenities. Under this wing , subscription is Paid (at a subsidized cost) to cover the cost of their demands.

Why we need your help?
We have with us three bighas of land in Tihuria Village near Sonarpur Rail Station, Kolkata. It is in Nayabad Post Office – 7 km away from Sonarpur Railway Station. But due to pandemic we are unable to start the construction due to crunches of fund. Now to complete this project, we need your help for donation. We have the idea, infrastructure and support to facilitate this initiative. We shall be highly obliged if you kindly condescend to render some financial assistance to us in order to actualize our philanthropic schemes. The project of this old age home has been conceived in order to accommodate elderly needy and destitute music teachers also who cannot afford to sustain themselves, and provide vegetarian lunch, dinner and breakfast to them so that they can peacefully continue this pursuit of imparting music lessons to their disciples and establish them as performing artists in the music world.

A message received from Pushpendu Chakraborty, President of Surnandan Bharati Cachar District Committee, addressed to Ritish Ranjan Chakraborty, All India Secretary of Surnandan Bharati, on 9th February 2021, regarding a donation for the proposed Old Age Home to be established at Sonarpur for needy, destitute and physically disabled musicians and music teachers.

Dear Sir,
I am very satisfied to know about the project. Now I like to request you to inform me about probable months of opening the **Old Age Home.**
I like to donate an amount of Rs 10000.00(Rupees ten thousand only) for the same in April/May,2021 which may please be taken as very minor help towards a great project. Thanks a lot.
With regards
Pushpendu Chakraborty 1:22 pm

Surnandan Bharati is really grateful to Respected Sri Pushpendu Chakraborty of Silchar, Assam.

Why you should contribute?
If you share the same empathy towards elders' needs giving them a happy life, helping the poor is important to you. You believe nature must be protected and you are rooting for the cause. To sum it up, we welcome like-minded people who can contribute and make this dream come true. We believe that this is the inception of many to come.

Dear donors & well wishers :
Any amount, big or small will go a long way in solving one of the major problems. These are the ways in which you can support:

Donate to the campaign and send your donation to -

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State Bank of India
C/D A/C No.
40071256509
Branch -
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SBIN0006789
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SURNANDAN BHARATI

Indrani: artist par excellence

Sudipa Chakravarty
Rewa, Madhya Pradesh

Poetry becomes alive when it is recited. The poet's feelings are enlivened by the elocutionist. Indrani Chakraborty is one such name. She also tries to enliven the poet's feelings through her recitation. She has always tried to keep the moments described in the poetry, alive. The feelings of the poet and the elocutionist herself merge into one when she performs. So her recitation is lively. Since her childhood she used to recite poems playfully which guided her along the path of life. Later on performing as a reciter from 1979 she never looked back. Indrani Chakraborty is an engineer by profession and an artist by heart.The recitation of a poem mesmerises the audience with the melodious vocal, the flawless pronunciation and the expression of the reciter. All these along with the swara, laya and taal of poetry are imbibed within her. Born in Dharmanagar, Tripura; her father Late Jogesh Chandra Chakraborty always supported her to fly high with her own wings. This inspiration from her father helped her achieve the big dreams of her life. Her family supported her like a backbone through the journey of her life. In between studies she not only pursued her dream as an elocutionist but also as a singer and dancer too. She passed the Junior Diploma in vocal securing first division from Prayag Sangeet Samiti (Allahabad) in 2014-2015. She also passed Senior Diploma in Rabindra Sangeet in 2016-2017 securing first division with distinction from Prayag Sangeet Samiti. She also mastered the art of dancing. She passed the Sangeet Bivakar in Rabindra Nritya in the year 1991-1992 from Bangiya Sangeet Parishad. She also managed to pass Sangeet Bivakar in Kathak in the year 1999-2000 from Bangiya Sangeet Parishad. Securing first position in Abritti Ratna in the year 2010-2011 from Bangiya Sangeet Parishad was like a "dream come true" for her. She has always aspired for this day. Receiving this award she achieved a milestone in her career by bagging the gold medal for recitation. As sky was the limit for her, she worked harder to achieve success as an elocutionist. She attended workshops of anchoring and recitation conducted by several eminent personalities which was arranged by respected elocutionist Bratati Bandopadhyay. She got to live her dream as an elocutionist when she got the chance as Yuba Bani Artist in All India Radio Program from 1995 to 2003. As a free spirit she never bound herself to just one thing. So she also

grabbed the chance of anchoring many government and non-government arranged programs. She was also nominated as a judge in many recitation competitions. She took part in many TV programmes as a guest artist. She was also interviewed as an elocutionist which was published in the Nandanik page of Dainik Sambad on 18th October, 2019. She never believed in consolidation. She always expanded in all spheres. She also got the opportunity to write articles on many topics. Her article on the relation between poetry and poet was published in Syandan Patrika on 14th February, 2020. Articles on relation between recitation and audio drama in a magazine named Sarbashakti Samonnittee was also published in her name. "The promotion and dissemination of regional poetry" was also an article written by her in Prantojyoti Dainik Silchar Paper. As an elocutionist she received Nandansree Award at the 27th All India Conference and Convocation Ceremony of Surnandan Bharati. She got many chances of participating and achieving certificates in different government and non government programmes. The Gunijan Sammanona award in the 16th International Conference of Biswa Banga Sahitya O Sanskriti Sammelan was another milestone of her life. Her true aspiration to achieve her dreams has not let her down. She achieved what she dreamt of. She has been a regular member of Biswa Banga Sahitya -o- Sanskriti Sammelan at Kolkata and Bachik Shilpi Sangsad at Agartala, Tripura. Her dream of becoming an elocutionist has driven her to opening a school for such aspiring students. She has opened a school for recitation which she named as Shrutipuram. She is the honorary Principal of Shrutipuram since 14 years. Affiliated to Bangiya Sangeet Parishad and Surnandan Bharati, the school has grown bigger in stature. She is also a member of the Surnandan Bharati, an All India Institute for music, dance, painting, recitation, yoga and other fields of the creative world. A scientific approach to the syllabus of recitation of Surnandan Bharati is being done under her guidance. A singer, a dancer and an elocutionist; Indrani is a complete figure of creativity. The journey of her life is an inspiration for the young budding artists.

Rubul: a talented singer

Sanchari Chowdhury
Ganguly Bagan, Kolkata

This is the story of Sri Rubul Sharma a singer, originally he is from Nalbari Amyapur. He is the son of late Hangsha Nath Sharma and late Ropady Devi. His parents' financial condition was not favourable. Inspite of that he always struggled to be a good singer. His passion for music has made him a good singer.

His sangeet guru was Sir Mohsin Ali. His elder sister Bhupati Devi also inspired him. First he learnt music from Sir Mohsin Ali Baihati, Kamrup, Assam. He took admission in a music school. He can play various types of instruments like Keyboard, Tabla, Harmonium, Mandolin etc. He is running a music school near Lumding, Assam for the last five years. Today he reaches this position after facing various struggles in life.

Rubul learnt tabla from Sir Sankar Dayal Mishra of Diphu Sangeet School. He appeared for fifth year examination in modern song. He received various awards in his music career.

In 2013, he received Nandansree Award. This year he received Sangeet Nandan Award. After his association with Surnandan Bharati, he gained a lot of opportunity to become a good singer. All good wishes for him to become a better, more better singer and musician in future.

Simantika - a brilliant recitor

Sonai Chowdhury
Ganguly Bagan, Kolkata

Simantika Bhattacharjee is known for recitation. She loves recitation from her very early age. She is learning recitation from Sushmita Ghosh and Debanjan Mukhopadhyay for two years.

She got many certificates from Surnandan Bharati. She wanted to build her career in recitation. Surnandan Bharati also gave her opportunities to fulfil her goal. She got many awards from Surnandan Bharati. She performed in various functions and got appreciations from the audience for her brilliant performance.

Sukdev : talented kirtan singer

Sukdev Naskar, son and disciple of Swapan Naskar, is a highly talented Kirtan Singer in the young generation of Artists. He has performed with spectacular success at many prestigious concerts and has participated in the 32nd Annual Kirtan Conference at Natun Diyara, Banspol, Garia on 14th April 2021. Surnandan Bharati is really proud to accept him in its panel of artists and has embarked on a noble mission to promote and patronize him throughout the country. The other Kirtan Singers were Ashutosh Mondal, Dolon Maity, Mousumi Adhikary, Nemai Dhara, Lakshmikanta Mondal, Shibu Ram Naskar, Anil Mondal, Mamata Mondal, Radha Raman Ghosh, Premananda Das Babaji and Swapan Naskar.

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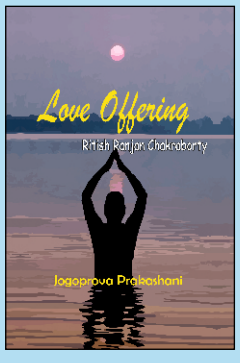

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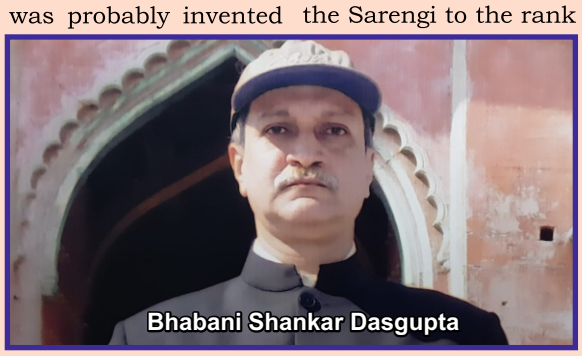
This cultural supplement 'Nandanik' is written and edited by Sarod Player Bhabani Shankar Dasgupta

Some Indian instruments played with the bow

The stringed instruments in North Indian (Hindusthani) music need no formal introduction today. The Sarode and the Sitar have been popularized throughout the world by many of our eminent maestros and are sometimes unconventionally used in modern western orchestras today. In Mediaeval India, the Surbahar and the Sursringar were very popular in the field of our classical music. Although these instruments are on the verge of extinction today, some foreigners who seriously study Hindusthani music play these instruments even today. It is worthwhile to mention in this context that all these instruments are played with plectra or finger strokes just like the Guitar or the Mandolin in Western Music.

In North India there are a few instruments that are played with the bow. The Sarengi, the Esraj and the Dilruba come within this category. These types of instruments have been referred to as Bitat Badya in our ancient Sanskrit treatises. But unlike the cello and the Double Bass which occupy a significant place in western classical orchestras these instruments have always been played as accompaniments to classical or light vocalists. Seldom are these played at solo instrumental concerts. Some outstanding performing such as Ustad Sagiruddin, Sri Ranadhir Roy and Sri Dakshina Mohan Tagore mastered these instruments and became famous as soloists but unfortunately none of their disciple could surpass or emulate them in this field.

The Sarengi - This instrument is one of the oldest instruments in North Indian Music. It is played with a bow and has become an integral part of our vocal music. Many scholars and musicologists assertively declare that this instrument which was probably invented



and played by Ravana the demon king of Lanka (modern Sri Lanka). But this is just a mythological notion. This instrument is also referred to as Sarang Veer by some Scholars. It is undoubtedly a very old instrument. This instrument has a wooden body and its sound box or resonator is covered with a thin sheet of hide. There are no frets on this instrument. It has four main strings and eleven sympathetic strings. Many years ago it was a folk instrument in the

Violin

rural areas of Northern India but subsequently it was elevated to the status of an accompanying instrument for classical vocal music (mainly kheyal) at royal aristocratic concerts. Today it occupies a dignified position in the field of Hindusthani music. Although it was considered to be a supporting instrument in the music world of yesteryears, some proficient maestro such as Ustad Sagiruddin Khan, Ustad Sultan Khan, Pandit Gopal Misra and Pandit Ram Narya came to limelight as soloists and elevated the Sarengi to the rank of a solo concert instrument.

Esraj – the Esraj has always been a common instrument in the society of classical music in Eastern Indian (mainly Bihar and Bengal). Scholars and musicologists are not very certain about the origin of this instrument. This instrument has a Sitar like finger board with Sitar like frets and nine or ten sympathetic strings. The sound-box of this instrument is elliptical in shape and is covered with a thin sheet of hide. Although the instrument is mainly popular as a supporting instrument to Tagore - songs (Rabindra – Sanget), it occupies a prominent place in the field of classical music as well. A well known school of classical Esraj was established in the district of Gaya in Bihar by the eminent virtuoso Hanuman Das Singh who hailed from Bundelkhand. This school flourished in the late 19th century and produced many masterly Esraj players such as Kanailal Dheri, Chandrika Prasad, Jogendra Lal Ganguly (Bhelu Babu) and Kalidas Paul. Asesh Banerjee, a proficient exponent of this school or Gharana subsequently came and settled at Santiniketan. He made a great reputation as a classical Esraj player. He produced a worthy disciple named Ranadhir Roy who also became a prominent figure in the field of classical music. He brought about a revolutionary change in the traditional style of Esraj playing and introduced some remarkable features of classical instrumental music (Tantra Kari Ang) in his style. But unfortunately he met with an untimely death. His disciple Buddhadev Das is an excellent classical Esraj player but he is seldom visible in the present musical arena which is totally commercialized today.

Dilruba - This instrument closely resembles the Esraj in shape. It is slightly bigger in size than the Esraj and its sound box is exactly like that of the Sarengi. While the Esraj has nine or ten sympathetic strings, the Dilruba has twelve sympathetic strings. The frets of this instrument are exactly like those of the Sitar. It is tuned at a slightly lower pitch than the Esraj and its tone is ideally suited to Alap. It is a very common instrument in the musical form of Northern and Western India for especially Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat. It is an ideal Instrument for providing melodic support to classical vocal music and can also be played as a solo concert instrument. Pandit Om Prakash of Delhi, Pandit Dakshina Mohan Tagore of Calcutta and Smt. Suvhada Pendharker of Bombay (Mumbai) were masterly Dilruba players who made a great reputation as soloists. But unfortunately they could not produce any worthy disciple and hence this instrument has practically disappeared from the field of classical music today.

The Violin - This instrument is undoubtedly an instrument of Western origin. Some scholars and musicologists maintain that possibly the instrument had originated in India many years ago and is a metamorphosis of the Pinaki Veena, an ancient stringed instrument invented by King Ravana of Lanka (Ceylon). But this is not at all an authentic view, nor is there any documentary evidence support to this view. The violin that we have in our country today has undoubtedly come from Europe. History tells us that the Portuguese were the first European race to visit India. They invaded the coastal

Sarengi

areas of Bengal as pirates during the reign of Emperor Akbar. Pratapaditya, the then king of Bengal, defeated them in a pitched battle and took some of them as prisoners. He then employed them as officers in his army. It was these Portuguese settlers who introduced the Gun (firearm) and the Violin in Bengal. Subsequently this instrument was introduced in the other parts of India as well and today it has become an integral part of Hindusthani (North-Indian) and Carnatic (South- Indian) music. The Violin is a fretless instrument with a wooden body. It is held horizontally against the left shoulder and played with a horse-tail bow. Pandit Vishnu Govind Jog (popularly known as V.G. Jog), Sisirkana Dhar Chowdhury and Pandit D.K. Datar were three eminent classical violinists in Northern India, while Lalgudi K. Jayaraman, MS. Gopalkrishnan and Smt. N. Rajan were three masterly violinists from the South. Smt. N Rajan was equally skilled in Hindusthani and Carnatic music and was attached to the music Department of Benaras Hindu University for a long time. Smt. Sisirkana Dhar Chowdhury resided at U.S.A where she was running a school of Indian Classical Music.

POET DESK

Bengal Bands Today

Bhabani Shankar Dasgupta
Sarod Player of Kolkata

Prodigal youngsters shabbily dressed
Revel incessantly without rest
Wander aimlessly in gardens and fields
Clad in jeans and jackets as shields
With mandolins drums and Spanish guitars
They behave like prisoners out of the bars
Howling some cacophonous western tunes
That crumble in a moment like soft and dunes
Bengal's rich music thus degenerates
Into discordant noise that only creates
Repugnance and panic among aged singers
Who handle the harmonium with adroit fingers
The soul of legendary K. C. Dey
Trembles at these striplings' foray
Had P. K. Mullick been alive
For a draught of air he had to strive
In this atmosphere of squalor and dirt
Where music and vulgarity shamelessly flirt.

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